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An Analysis of the Role of Culture in the Identity Construction of Migrant Pakistani Women in South Africa

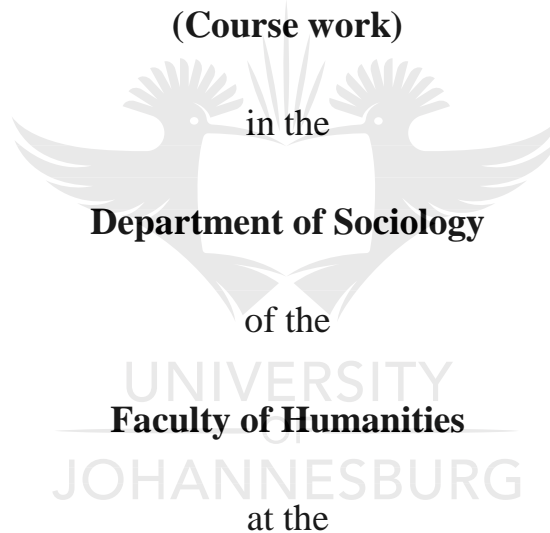
By

Imrana Qasim

219021954

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University of Johannesburg

Supervised by

**Prof Pragna Rugunanan
Prof Tapiwa Chagonda**

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Abstract

The contemporary shape and speed of globalization is contributing to an acceleration in the phenomenon of cross-border migration. Similarly, visibility and incorporation of women in the process of migration has led to the feminisation of migration. This research is about Pakistani migrant women in South Africa, with a focus on the role of culture in their identity construction. Pakistan is the seventh largest country in the world in terms of population. Coupled with this, the country has meagre economic resources to cater for the large population. Consequently, migration to other countries is one of the main opportunities for seeking livelihoods abroad. South Africa is among the top migrant destinations for Pakistani migrants, on account of economic opportunities and a tolerant multi-racial and multi-cultural social fabric. Pakistan is still a male-dominant society. This also reflects in migration process where male family members migrate first and women join them later.

Migrant Pakistani women living in South Africa tend to construct and reshape their post-migration identities. Culture plays a crucial role in this identity reconstruction. This study analysed the process of identity construction of Pakistani women in terms of culture while they are living in South Africa. Eight Pakistani women were interviewed to gauge how significant a role culture plays in their post-migration life. The study used qualitative research methods to gather data. The findings shed light on the importance of culture as a determining factor in shaping identity of these women in South Africa.

The intersection of religion and culture is one of the determining factors for the identity of Pakistani women. After migration, culture proves to be an asset in the form of cultural capital. Migration affects working and stay-at-home women differently, adding autonomy and empowerment to the latter. The theoretical framework of Bourdieu's concepts of the habitus and capitals, specifically cultural capital, describes the continuity of influence of Pakistani culture in shaping and constructing identities of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. Pakistani migrant women negotiate and construct their identities through religion and culture. Through various forms of belonging, women keep their connectedness with Pakistani culture, thus strengthening their cultural identity. The findings of the study reveal that the religious identity of being a Muslim is more valuable and prestigious than a cultural identity for these women. While religion allows them freedom and access to outside world, culture inhibits their movement and empowerment.

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Chapter 1

Overview and Scope of the Study

1.1. Introduction

Pakistani migrants are present across the world, with some countries considered more favourable to them than others. South Africa is one such country where Pakistani migrants like to come and settle (Singh 2015). Many Pakistani nationals migrated to South Africa in pursuit of employment opportunities since South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994 (Klotz 2000). Pakistani women, accompanying their male partners, form a significant proportion of migrants arriving and settling in South Africa. Migrant Pakistani women negotiate a new social life in South Africa. In doing so, they tend to construct a new identity to adapt to life after migration as they find their space between the home and host countries respectively. Sharma (2011) states that identity is a fluid and evolving process; this means that migrant Pakistani women need to navigate between adopting a new identity and holding on to the old one – that is, the identity before migration and after migration.

Among the factors influencing the identity construction of migrants are their culture and religion. Culture refers to the social practices of a society. Religion is a set of beliefs and worship of God (Ramadan 2010). Culture is a patterned manner of thinking, reacting, and attaching values to a system formed for interacting, sharing, and providing a sense of belonging (Lincoln 2000). Since culture is a distinctive characteristic of a social group, its values and norms set it apart from other social groups and cultures. It forms the basis of identity construction of human beings and is the most important element of their identity construction. The focus of this study is on (a) women's migration from Pakistan to South Africa and (b) the role of culture in shaping their identity after migration to South Africa. This chapter consists of two main sections: the first section establishes a context for this study by considering the history of Pakistan, migration from Pakistan (including a section on migrant Pakistanis in South Africa). The second section of the chapter discusses the rationale, problem statement and research question, as well as the significance of the study. Thereafter, I provide the structure of this dissertation.

1.2. Pakistan: A Brief History

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, Muslim-majority country located in South Asia. The country emerged on the map of the world on the 14th of August 1947 out of united India under British colonial rule. In 1971, the eastern part of Pakistan emerged as a different country named Bangladesh. Pakistan's neighbouring countries are China, India, Afghanistan and Iran. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the current population of Pakistan is 220 million, in which men comprise 51% of the population while women make up 48.56%. Pakistan's 2017 population census was done 19 years after the previous census. The population had increased massively from 132 million in 1998 to 220 million in 2017. This great ballooning of population is putting severe pressure on natural and human-made resources, which is contributing to migration from Pakistan.



Figure 1: Map of Pakistan.

Source: <https://geology.com/world/pakistan-satellite-image.shtml>

The social fabric of Pakistan exhibits certain peculiar traits, which make it distinct. The country is home to more than 100 languages. It has five provinces, namely Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and Gilgit Baltistan. Although it is a Muslim-majority country, there are more than ten sects, which demonstrate sharp divisions. On one hand, there is a burgeoning urban population adopting western or so-called cosmopolitan culture. On the other hand, there is a rural population still hanging on to conservative social moorings (Shaikh 2018). In terms of its governing structure and system, Pakistan is a parliamentary democracy with a

federal state structure. The population of Pakistan is growing at a faster pace while resources are not increasing. Migration for the betterment of one's economic situation is the most common type of out-migration from Pakistan.

1.3. Migration from Pakistan

Over the last few decades of sustainable and unsustainable economic growth in different regions of the world, migration has gained a central dimension in today's globalised world. According to the Index Mundi report (2018), the net migration rate of Pakistan is -1.2 % of the population, which is quite high. Pakistan is a migrant exporting country. Having a surplus of labour, Pakistan exports labour power to different countries. Since it has a huge working population, many people migrate to different countries in search of work.

Labour migration is the dominant form of migration from Pakistan. According to the International Labour Organization (2016), emigration from Pakistan has increased since 2011. Women form only 0.1% of the total emigration from Pakistan. Therefore, men also make up 99% of migrating workers. According to a 2015 status report¹ about labour migration from Pakistan, the province of Punjab has the largest share, 51%, of outgoing migrant workers, while Karachi is the biggest migrant worker sending district. This report also suggests that only 1% of the migrants are highly skilled, 2% are highly qualified, 42% are skilled, 16% are semi-skilled and 39% are unskilled.

1.3.1. Pakistani Migrants in South Africa

According to the Pakistan South Africa Association, there are approximately 150,000 to 200,000 Pakistanis living in South Africa (Appendix G). They live mainly in the major cities of South Africa. The majority of the migrant Pakistanis are concentrated in urban areas because of economic opportunities. Medical doctors make up a large proportion of Pakistani migrants. Migration from Pakistan to South Africa increased after the 1990s, as South Africa was transitioning to democracy (Klotz 2000, Singh 2015).

¹ This report was commissioned by the International Labour Organization in 2015; it was the first ever report on international migration from Pakistan. It used data from the Bureau of Overseas Employment in Pakistan until 2015. This report provides ample data on migration from Pakistan. The statistical data cited in this section is from this report.

Despite being geographically distant, Pakistani migrants came to South Africa for economic opportunities (Jinnah 2006). While most of them own grocery shops, cell phone businesses, hair salons, electronics shops, hardware shops and other small shops, some of them are well settled and have big businesses. A discussion with the members of the Pakistan South Africa Association and the study participants suggest that there are many male migrant Pakistanis in South Africa who settled first, and then called their wives and children over to South Africa.

1.4. Patriarchy and Women in Pakistan

Patriarchy is the control and exploitation of women by men. It is one of the oldest, most pervasive forces in traditional and modern societies. Power and control over women is the worst form of patriarchy. Although Pakistan is an Islamic republic and Islam, being the dominant religion, guides all the laws of the country, culture and traditions nevertheless have a strong hold in society. However, Patriarchy is the fundamental element of the structure of Pakistani society (Habiba, Ali & Ashfaq 2016). Islam gives a respectful status to women, but the status of Pakistani women is based on traditions and not on Islamic values.

Furthermore, Ahmed and Anwar (2018) state that, although some Pakistani women are able to receive education and acquire good jobs, nonetheless they are still helpless in family matters because of socio-cultural pressures under the guise of one flimsy pretext or the other. This is done keeping aside all relevant verses of Islam's holy book and practices of Islam's Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which emphasize the just treatment of the women in all relationships. Islam being an enlightened religion, it allows women to work outside the home and do business. Being a Muslim myself, it is evident from the teachings of Islam that women can work outside the house as long as they do not neglect their household duties. The cultural contradiction of this religious freedom has been hindering the economic growth of Pakistani women.

The hierarchal positioning of men over women has been characteristic of Pakistani society since its inception in 1947. In a typical household in Pakistan, men are the head of the family and autonomous in decision making for the household. Ahmad (2018) explores in his study that women are expected to be subordinate and submissive to men. The male child in a Pakistani family is considered the protector of the family from an early age, while daughters are considered "others" and called *paraya dhan* (future husband and in-laws) as Meraj and Sadaqat (2016) noted.

Pakistani women are secluded and excluded due to patriarchy and socio-cultural norms of the society. The constitution of Pakistan does not hinder the political participation of women, but political parties and the political environment are not very favourable for women (Bano 2009:2). Although Pakistan had its first female prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, this did not strengthen the position of women; instead, it strengthened a male member of the family (Bhutto 2014). Major issues encountered by women are gender discrimination and subordination to men (Rukhshanda 2005). Similarly, the subordination, oppression and economic inactivity of Pakistani women is a result of patriarchal culture in Pakistan (Batoool 2018, Akhter 2011; Bukhari and Ramzan 2011). Religious, cultural and societal elements not only put pressure on women to remain confined to their houses, but also discourage any economic activity or initiative taken by women to be economically independent.

The next section describes the problem statement and the research question.

1.5. Problem Statement and Research Questions

I married in 2016 in Pakistan. Since then I have been moving from one country to another, as it is the remit of my husband's work in the international division of the foreign ministry of Pakistan. I came to South Africa in September 2017. I was privileged to meet many Pakistani women and families. I observed that their cultural linkages to Pakistan and family structure out of the country are still remarkably strong even after a long period.

"I migrated to South Africa in search of a better employment opportunity with my husband, so that I can also work here, as I was not allowed to work in Pakistan due to family honour and social status." These are the words of a migrant Pakistani woman whom I asked about her reason for migrating to South Africa. Her answer inspired me to research and write about migrant Pakistani women in South Africa and to explore their identity construction, and whether this process is affected by the culture and traditions of Pakistan in South Africa also.

Very little literature about migrant Pakistani women in South Africa was available, so I had to look for literature about migrant Pakistani women in other parts of the world. This study aims to reflect on whether culture affects the identity construction process of migrant Pakistani women. Therefore, this study discusses migration, culture, gender, and identity construction by drawing on experiences of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa who are either working or staying at home. A Pakistani women, in the quest for her identity in a foreign society, faces

issues of being a woman and a migrant. This study aims to examine how the challenges of being a women continue to influence the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women after migration to South Africa. The principal question for this study was: **What is the role of culture in the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa?**

The research objectives of this study were to explore the importance of cultural capital in the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, to investigate the role of family in the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, and to interrogate whether migration affects working and stay-at-home Pakistani women differently in South Africa.

1.6. The Significance of the Study

This study is important because migrant Pakistani women constitute a large proportion of the migrant Pakistani community in South Africa. There is a need to study the lived experiences of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa as some of them have been living here for the past 30 years. I aimed to contribute to the existing literature about migrant women in South Africa while specifically focussing on the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women. This research also signifies the importance of studying migrant Pakistani women and their experiences in South Africa. It examines the prevalence of Pakistani culture outside of Pakistan and its impact on the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa particularly.

1.7. Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is further divided into four chapters. Chapter 2 gives a detailed review of literature relevant to migration, Pakistani culture, Pakistani women and their identity construction. The literature is divided into three themes. The first theme revolves around migration in general and migration of women in particular. The second theme sets out to give a detailed account of migration and culture of Pakistan, while the third theme revolves around the culture and identity construction of migrant Pakistani women. The second section of the chapter deals with the theoretical framework.

Chapter 3 explains the research methodology and the research design for this study. It outlines the methods of data collection and data analysis. It also shows the ethical considerations taken into account throughout the study.

Chapter 4 is the findings chapter. It discusses the findings in light of the main themes and sub themes yielded from the analysis of the data. Some of the themes were: the reasons for migration to South Africa, forms of belonging to Pakistan and religious-cultural practices to reconstruct the identity as a working or stay-at-home Muslim Pakistani women after migration.

Chapter 5 analyses and concludes that migration has empowered migrant Pakistani women. Culture and religion play a significant role in the post-migration identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. The study concludes with a progressive perspective of the positive influence of religion and culture on the lives of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

1.8. Conclusion

This chapter has laid the bedrock for this dissertation. It contextualised the migration of Pakistani women to South Africa. A section on migration from Pakistan explained that Pakistani men migrate more than women. There are limited opportunities for women to migrate independently. Women mostly migrate for family reunification. There is a strong migrant Pakistani community present in South Africa and women constitute a significant proportion of this community. The research explored the importance of studying the identity construction experiences of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. The next chapter presents the literature review for the study, aiming to cast light on Pakistani culture and identity construction patterns of Pakistani women.

Chapter 2

Patterns of Identity Construction and Cultural Implications of Female Migration from Pakistan: A Review of the Literature

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this research is to understand the role of culture in the construction of identity of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. Chapter 1 laid the foundation for this study; it briefly explained the history, and migration trends of Pakistan. The chapter identified the research area and the motivation for this study. This chapter aims to give a detailed review of literature resonating with the study. The literature review provides an enhanced understanding of the studies conducted around this topic, as well as identifying the gap that this study aims to address.

The links amongst culture, migration and identity are playing out more tangibly as the process of migration unfolds with greater speed across the world. The literature review for this study revolves around three themes. First, it briefly explains the gendered dimension of migration to South Africa and from Pakistan. Second, it discusses some of the post-migration challenges faced by migrant Pakistani women in different countries. Third, the link between migration and identity is established to add nuance to the understanding of identity after migration. The last section of the chapter elucidates the theoretical framework for this study.

2.2. Gendered Dimensions of Migration

With the advent of globalisation, migration streams have accelerated and diversified across the globe. Migration plays an important role in human mobility and settlement. Migration is defined as “the movement of people from one place to settle in another place” (Sharma 2011:38). Similarly, Levitt (2007) terms it a transnational process, and it is also a tool to improve the quality of life (Castles & Miller 2003). While asserting the benefits of migration, Bhugra (2004) submits that migration has enriched the diversity of cultures all around the world

as people from one culture migrate to settle in a place with a different culture. Migration provides migrants with an opportunity to reshape their lives.

Like men, women are also migrating in pursuit of better economic opportunities and quality of life. This recognition of women as independent migrants in the process of migration has led to increased visibility of women in migration (Carling 2005; Curran, Shafer, Donato & Garip 2006). Due to the intensification of women's migration across the globe, migration has taken a gendered dimension. With the feminization of migration and incorporation of gendered perspectives into the process of migration, women migrants gained significant visibility in the Global North and South. Adding to this, Boyle and Halfacree (2005) claim that the gendering of migration in literature incorporates the contrasting, divergent and distinctive struggles and experiences of migrant women. Furthermore, Sharma (2011) astutely argues that, with the feminisation of migration, this phenomenon can be seen as an escape from patriarchal norms that provides women with an opportunity to gain independence, empowerment, and autonomy in their chosen host countries. However, in certain situations, its benefits can be constrained and hampered by the cultural context of the migrant as well as gender discrimination and inequalities in both the host country and country of origin.

Similarly, studies such as Lutz's (2010) and Mahapatro's (2013) focus on migration as a divergent phenomenon, asserting that it can either be liberating or subjugating for women. They maintain that women can gain autonomy in their post-migration life by redefining gender roles. In societies where women are required to look after the family and household, economic independence after migration can still be challenged by patriarchal practices from the home country. Since this study took place in South Africa, it is important to discuss gendered migration in that context. Migration to South Africa from the African continent as well as from Europe and Asia have changed the post-migration settlement challenges for migrants. With a growing number of migrants coming to South Africa for economic opportunities, women form a significant number of these migrants (Mbiyozo 2018). Within the African context, women migrants have been the subject of many studies such as Palmary (2017) Jinnah (2010), Hiralal (2014), Rugunanan (2017) and Mbiyozo (2018). These studies incorporate the gender specific challenges of migrant women in South Africa.

Given lack of access to social networks and social isolation multiplied by cultural barriers, women are vulnerable to domestic violence, as men control and dominate the women. In

contrast to African migrant women, migrant Indian women face cultural barriers to seeking social support which in turn increases the dominance of men in their life (Hiralal 2017).

Having established the context of migration in South Africa, the next section focuses on Pakistani women and their migration process in the context of Pakistani culture.

2.3. Fewer Opportunities for Pakistani Women to Migrate Independently

Pakistani women have limited or no access to social networks in Pakistan that can assist them to migrate out in pursuit of better economic opportunities (Sadaquat & Sheikh 2011). The general attitude of society towards Pakistan women's migration for economic opportunities is very hostile and unfavourable; hence, women who decide to migrate independently are not welcomed or supported in the process (Ruyssen & Salomone 2018; Zaman 2008). For Pakistani women, migration for the sake of family reunification earns a positive attitude from society, but a decision to migrate independently can spell trouble for Pakistani women within the family. This hostility continues to affect women during and after the migration, as the studies of Malik (2009) and Harriss and Shaw (2009) indicate: given the potential threats and exploitation on the basis of gender, it is feared that independent migration is dangerous for women as they can be victims of sexual abuse.

Owing to strict gender roles and a higher rate of illiteracy amongst Pakistani women, the migration of women from all over the world, including Pakistan, is very low (Chowbey 2016). Economic dependence is high due to the restricted social mobility of women. Stringent cultural norms impede their movement. Pakistani women form only 0.1 % of migrants from Pakistan and men make up the other 99.9% of the migrating population (International Labour Organization 2016). This huge gender gap in migration from Pakistan is a reflection of pronounced gender restrictions and cultural factors that make up the spectrum of Pakistani society. Social and cultural practices relegate women to a status inferior to men's and prohibit independent mobility. According to Muslim religious practices, women regardless of their age should be accompanied by *mehram* (men), so for women to migrate on their own and settle in a new country is difficult for single or unaccompanied migrant Pakistani women (Akhter 2011). Building on this, Malik (2009) narrates that economic dependency also contributes to the low migration rates of women from Pakistan because society sees male members of the society as producers for the family.

The major reasons for the lower migration rates of women from Pakistan are religious traditionalism, gender discrimination and a lack of social networks. Studies by Delavande and Zafar (2019) and Zubair (2016) show that various factors, such as the superiority of men, the subordinate status of women and the patriarchal landscape shape different aspects of the lives of Pakistani women. This implicates the exploration of various cultural factors in the lives of Pakistani women.

2.4. Implications of Culture and Religion on the Status of Women in Pakistan

Pakistan is a feudal tribal society where gender, caste, ethnicity and race are major components of hierarchy (Sheikh 2018). It is a mosaic of different cultures. Islam is the dominant religion. Hinduism, Christianity, and other religions are also practiced. Islam guides all the life principles of Pakistani people. As Ramadan (2010:214) states that Islam is not a culture, but the culture of Muslims is made up of Islam giving it a religious essence. But Boyer (2001:47) states that religion and culture are intricately linked as religion is a cultural expression. Both religion and culture provide its followers with a distinct self or identity. Similarly, the cultural elements of Pakistan are derived from religious belief of Islam. Due to a predominant influence of religion in cultural manifestation of Pakistan, religion and culture are closely linked to each other. The cultural and social fabric is deeply concentrated in colonial roots. Even long after independence in 1947, the honour of the family is still associated with the honour of the women in the family. The strict social, cultural and religious environment restricting Pakistan's women participation in economic activity led to their late entry into the development process of Pakistan (Rotter 2019). This late entry is because of the conservatism prevailing in Pakistani society.

The social, religious, and cultural set up of Pakistani society grants more power to men as Pakistan is a patriarchal society supported by political and economic structures (Zaman 2008). In Pakistan, women are a marginalised group in society given the fact that they have less or no autonomy over their lives (Shaikh 2018). The religion of Islam gives superiority to men over women, entitling women to work inside the house and men outside the house, but it does not restrict the working of women outside the house for financial gains. Although the concept of

*pardah*² was introduced in Islam to protect women, it has now become a source of restriction for women because men think that women cannot keep up with *pardah* if they work outside the house, and women are asked to stay inside the houses owing to *pardah*. Akhter (2011) writes that the imbalance in power relations between men and women creates gender discrimination and the victims of this discrimination are girls and women.

According to Rukhshanda (2005), inequality of power between men and women not only makes women subordinate but also makes them dependent on men for everyday necessities of life, since men are responsible for everything. In this context, Nosheen (2011) and Pakeeza (2015) reflect in their studies, conducted in Pakistan, that the lack of power in decision making strengthens the hierarchy that places women in a subordinate position to men in Pakistan. Bradley and Siagol (2012) show how the elder male member of the house has the autonomy to decide whether a girl child can go to an educational institution or not. Further, arranged marriages are common, and the norm where the bride only meets the groom on the day of the wedding is indicative of the subjugated nature and oppression of Pakistani women. Reflecting on this, Malik and Courtney (2011) critique the strict version of the teachings of Islam that religious clerics have imposed, thus putting more pressure on male members to control the women of the house. Due to the lack of agency of the women, they lack authority and hence are subject to oppression and suppression, and therefore men continue to be dominant and assert their power and authority in both public and private spaces.

In keeping with this context, Ozyegin (2015) points out that religious traditionalism coupled with cultural conservatism has immensely affected the development and prosperity of women in Pakistan. There is a paradoxical gender imbalance in Pakistan, because, on one hand, Pakistan had its first female prime minister, Benazir Bhutto (from 1988 to 1990 and again from 1993 to 1996), who was also the first woman prime minister in the Muslim world (Bhutto 2014), while on the other hand women across the country do not get an opportunity to study and work.

This starkest gender imbalance affects the developmental process for women in Pakistan as they are less visible in state decision making, as the social, economic and political institutions are dominated by men. Although women are striving to progress and prosper, the role of men

² *Pardah* is the covering of whole body of women with a large piece of cloth. This concept was introduced by the religion of Islam to differentiate Muslim women from other religions and provide protection to women from non-Muslims in the earlier days of Islam.

in their lives is still dominant. Bhattacharya (2014) pinpoints "male perception of the role of women" as the basic factor hindering the empowerment of women in Pakistan. A growing number of studies (Muhammad, Rahim & Hanif, 2019; Nawaz & Manj 2016), in keeping with this thesis, find that gender disparity prevails in Pakistan.

Gender imbalance in workplaces is very common. Studies such as Chauhan's (2014) and Habiba et al.'s (2016) found that men dominate social, economic and political institutions in Pakistan. This male domination creates hurdles for women who want to work and challenge the traditional norms to construct new identities. Culture and gender are tied together through constructed patterns of masculinity and femininity (Farooq 2020). The patriarchal norms of Pakistani society shape the lives of Pakistani women. These trends continue to show the powerful role of men over women.

In the context of migration, men usually migrate first from Pakistan, as they have better access to social and migration networks as well as economic independence. Women follow them later, mostly for family reunification. This family reunification is also influenced by gendered roles, as women are already expected to work in the domestic sphere. Studies such as those by Sebastian and Guerrero (2011) and Harriss and Shaw (2009) reflect that migrant Pakistani women go through a similar processes of working around their assigned gender roles of taking care of the house and raising the next generation.

Further challenges are described briefly in the following section.

2.5. Post-migration Challenges of Migrant Pakistani Women

Abroad

Previous sections narrated the challenges of gender norms as well as cultural and traditional factors determining the status of Pakistani women. It was also mentioned that not many women from Pakistan get an opportunity to migrate. Those who migrate with their male partners, or later for family reunification, go through a different set of challenges. These challenges multiply when migrant Pakistani women decide to work, as Woodward (2018) writes. They not only face challenges at home but also in their workplaces because of the specification of attire, gender roles and religion. These components often lead to migrant Pakistani women facing exclusion after migration.

A Pakistani diaspora is present in many countries. The United Kingdom has a large diaspora from Pakistan. The Pakistani community forms the second largest ethnic minority in the UK (Niaz & Nasir 2018). There is a growing body of contemporary literature which articulates that Pakistani migrants go through a different set of challenges in UK. Werbner (2005) alludes to the paradoxes of culture for migrant Pakistanis in the United Kingdom. She talks about the complex identity of migrant Pakistanis as Muslim and South Asians, illustrating how the complex identity of Pakistanis, based on their race and religion, is one of the hardest to reconstruct. She contextualizes culture in a process of dislocation, transplantation and relocation. While analysing the experiences of the Pakistani community, Werbner (2005) describes that cultural relocation is a painful process for Pakistani immigrants because of their strong cultural linkages to Pakistan. Pakistani migrants face a plethora of challenges in the process of identity construction, as culture and religion guide this process. However, with the relocation of cultural practices, identity becomes more varied and complex since they are away from their homeland. Werbner's study focussed on the Pakistani community as a whole, while this research aims to analyse the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, as the strategies for cultural relocation and identity construction and the experiences of men and women are different. In addition, patriarchal family structures influence their settlement in the new society, as they do not get an opportunity to adapt to new ways of life after migration. This study by Werbner is relevant as it uncovers the religious and cultural pressures on migrant Pakistani women, but it does not explore their impact on the women's identity construction in the host country.

In keeping with this context, Fijac and Sonn (2004) articulate that religious affiliation affects the lives of Pakistani women in Australia. While attempting to preserve their own culture and identity, they become victims of racism and social exclusion. Further, if women try to be westernised, they are excluded from their community, and if they preserve their own culture, they are perceived as traditional and orthodox by others. Similarly, Bun (2006), while addressing the issues faced by Pakistani women in Hong Kong, argues that because of the religious and cultural values of Pakistani women, they are unable to find suitable jobs even if they want to work. Their attire becomes a barrier to getting a job. Attire is an important element of adherence to one's own culture and identity. Similarly, Sebastian and Guerrero (2011) explain that, because of the cultural context, migrant women are confined to their houses as they do not get permission to work. It is difficult for these women to surpass cultural obstacles.

In male-dominated societies such as Pakistan, women are considered homemakers and guardians of culture and traditions. It becomes relevant in this context that women are responsible for keeping culture alive. While writing about the culture and women of Pakistan, Sebastian and Guerrero (2011) caution that Pakistani culture hinders the progress of Pakistani women, as they are unable to access social networks outside of their families. Because of the cultural context, migrant Pakistani women are confined to their houses, which results in social exclusion (Bun 2006). Furthermore, Harris and Shaw (2009), writing about Pakistani migrants in Britain – specifically the strictly gendered roles of men and women in Pakistani families – show that male members of the family are seen as producers for the family in financial terms, while women continue to look after the household chores and raising the next generation. Because of the seclusion of these women owing to *purdah* (the veil) and *char devari* (confinement within the house), they are less publicly visible. To complicate this, a burden is placed on the shoulders of these women to fulfil the expectations of their own and their host community.

In addition to this, Woodward (2018) points out that economic inactivity among migrant Pakistani women in the UK is very high. Cultural pressure and formulation of gendered roles as man/women and husband/wife as well as the conventional culture make women homemakers. It constrains not only their economic independence but also their employment choices. Statistics from this report show that 44% of Pakistani women in the UK are economically inactive; this economic inactivity relates to culture rather than religion as the religion of Islam does not forbid women from working and being financially independent. Overwhelming inequality and patriarchal attitudes affect the lives of Pakistani women. Chowbay (2016) submits that the cultural traditions of Pakistani migrant women hurt their progress and their attempts at being socially included in other countries. The author also lays out the finding that cultural adherence prevents women from working and becoming economically independent as they continue to be economically dependent on men.

While comparing the identity construction process of Moroccan and Pakistani women in Italy, Giuliani and Tagliabue (2015) found that religion, coupled with cultural and traditional values, is the centre of identity for these women in Italy. In addition, their culture and traditions are a crucial aspect of their lives; they narrate that Moroccan women define their identity in the spatial terms of having no homeland, as they miss their country, while Pakistani women

exhibited strong cultural traditional links to Pakistan as they missed their culture while living in Italy.

The challenges discussed above, illuminated by the studies done in various countries, allude to the many factors which influence the post-migration lives of migrant Pakistanis. It also signifies a gap in understanding of how migrant Pakistani women in South Africa are constructing their identities, which this research undertakes to address.

The next section describes the process of identity construction in the context of migration.

2.6. Migration and the Identity Construction Process

People have a binary experience of culture: on one hand, they are the product of culture, and on the other hand, they have to adopt a culture as they proceed in life. Identities are composed of many layers motivated by lived experiences. These layers of identity assume greater importance when people settle into a new culture, thus adding more layers.

Identity is a rich, multivalent concept that reflects an individual's personality (Bhatia & Ram 2009). In this way, the construction of identity in a different culture becomes an experience influenced by the native environment and new life realities for migrants. The concept of cultural identity is crucial in migration, as it entails new challenges to identity construction. Identity is vital for individuals to make life choices. For instance, migration is a life choice made by people for various social, economic and political reasons. After migration, individuals' identities tend to reshape. In addition, Collier (2013) points out that migrants face different stressful experiences, such as change of cultural norms as well as identity alteration.

After migration, migrants tend to form new cultural identities that are affected by the processes of settling in a new place. This process is understood as identity construction. While focussing on the communication developments in the world, Gilmartin (2008) submits that migrants bring along their imagined cultural communities to contest their identities in the host country. This contest results in dual cultural attachment of migrants to their home and host countries respectively. It resonates with the research question for this study regarding how migrant Pakistani women deal with the process of constructing their identity in a foreign land, which is South Africa for this study.

Jameson (2007) dwells on how the perception of one's self through a cultural lens forms the cultural identity of individuals. He posits that individuals reflect themselves through cultural perceptions. Similarly, Jameson (2007:198) defines it as "an individual's sense of self, derived from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life". This definition uniquely argues that identity is formed by multiple factors, traditions being one of them. It also applies to the post-migration life of the migrants. For example, Bhugra and Becker (2005) maintain that identity and migration are linked through the self-perception of migrants. The way migrants form strategies to cope with the new culture in the host country gives them a new perception of themselves. This self-perception can give rise to many challenges after migration.

2.7. Theoretical Framework

The concept of identity is ubiquitous across all social science disciplines. Broadly, identity is used in three distinct ways. As expounded by Stryker and Burke (2000); firstly, it is directly referred to the culture of people. Secondly, it relates to the common identification in a social category. Thirdly, identity is linked with the self-perception of people rooted in their multiple roles and contexts. Identity is both inherent and acquired. In this way identity consists of religion, culture, and belongingness.

Although there are different theories to understand the identity construction process. Social identity theory is one of them. Although it is not directly related to migration it explains the identity processes within the group of individuals (Turner & Brown 1978). It refers to conditions that an individual's social identity becomes more important than its identity. The theory refers to identity as an extendable fluid (Colic-Peisker & Walker 2003). It postulates that an individual is influenced by its culture and societal structures (Brown 2000). It also illustrates the social construction of an individual's thinking which is largely affected by their group of reference. Breakwell (1986) narrates identity process theory as an integrative theoretical framework which elucidates the identity concerning with social actions and social change. Besides, this theory also postulates the processes experienced by individuals in constructing their identities. Breakwell (1986) explains two types of the identity of individuals distinctively; one being personal identity and other being social identity. Personal identity is the view of an individual about one's self and private space, while social identity refers to the self-perception of an individual in a social setting.

To understand the identity construction experiences of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, the theoretical framework I draw on is Pierre Bourdieu theory of social practice. Pierre Bourdieu (1986), a French sociologist, wrote about the three linked concepts of habitus, field and capital in his theory of practice. The theory of practice gives a framework for understanding the consequences of migration and its implications for women. The habitus of an individual refers to the interplay between the individual's free will and structure (Bourdieu 1973:55). Habitus is a property of individuals, which consists of their life experiences. The interplay of habitus and culture in a given field produces the practice. Habitus can be understood as a comfort shell for individuals to rely upon. A change in habitus could produce massive normative outcomes for individuals. The concept of habitus can be used effectively to deepen understanding of the practical strategies implemented by migrants to exhibit and practice their social, cultural and economic capitals (Erel 2010).

Bourdieu (1986) calls cultural possessions “cultural capital”. Plüss (2009) emphasizes that after migration, social actors are prone to cultural identity changes as they strive to access resources in the host country. Field (2003) notes that in some of the cases, migrants are equipped with a changing habitus called “cosmopolitan habitus” to adapt to new social contexts, which in turn produces strong cultural and economic capital in the country of origin, as the three dimensions of habitus are convertible.

Bourdieu (1990) divides capital into four categories, namely social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital. He explains economic capital as the monetary things owned by the individual. Symbolic capital is described as the prestige of an individual. For my study, I make use of the concepts of social and cultural capital of individuals, as put forward by Bourdieu (1990). The concept of cultural capital helps to investigate migrants' cultural capital. Migrants bring along their own cultural capital, which may or may not fit in the new country. Thus migration entails new challenges of absorbing or renegotiating cultural capital. Erel (2010) argues that migrants restructure cultural capital in the process of migration and calls it “migrating cultural capital”. He submits that the cultural capital of individuals tends to move with the individuals. As individuals migrate from one place to another to increase their more economic or symbolic capital, they bring along their cultural capital.

Cultural capital can be an asset for individuals as well as a source of exclusion in the new society in the case of migration. Bourdieu (1986:247) defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of

more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition”. The social-cultural capital of individuals refers to the cultural bonds which individuals carry with themselves when they move. Social and cultural capital is the inheritance of the group to which individuals belong. This notion of cultural capital can apply to Pakistani women in South Africa. When Pakistani women migrate, they take their cultural bond with them. This cultural bond is essential to keep them linked to their home country, while at the same time, it can add to the responsibilities of the migrant women. Consequently, after migration, women are supposed to be guardians of cultural values and practices.

Social capital is one of the most important forms of the capital of migrants. Zhang, Anderson and Zhan (2011) observe that it can be referred as an individual sense of belonging or a community entity. It can promote economic wellbeing in the host country through social networks (Bourdieu 1986). Social capital is differentiated into its two primary forms of bridging and bonding, proposes (Putnam 2002). Bridging capital from interaction with the local population has a significant impact on the economic growth of the migrants, as people from different social and economic backgrounds work together and bridge the interaction (Putnam 2002). By contrast, bonding capital from interactions and social activities with kins and friends does not show economic growth as it is a means of emotional support for the migrants (Burt 2000). Hence, theoretically, bridging is more effective for the economic capital of migrants. Bourdieu’s idea of habitus and cultural capital provides a framework for understanding the dispositions of migrant Pakistani women. However, the role played by social networks in facilitating migration can hinder the benefit of migration for women. Similarly, social networks can bar women from attaining the potential advantages of migration.

Since the cultural capital of the migrating women tends to keep them associated with their home country, this leads to the idea of a “reference point“, as elucidated by Elijah Anderson (2011). In his book about a theory named “cosmopolitan canopy”, Anderson (2011: xiv) conceives of canopies as multiple spaces for human interaction. Individuals tend to stick to their roots, or reference point, in multicultural settings. Although interaction with different people in a diverse society allows people to interact with each other, the reference point for these individuals often remains the same in terms of their ethnic group or social class, according to Anderson (2011:67). In doing so, he acknowledges that people can interact with each other in a multicultural place but they tend to feel comfortable amongst people like themselves who share the same class, religion, race and cultural bond.

This study closely implements Bourdieu's concept of social and cultural capital in relation to defining and defending the identity of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. The theory is very comprehensive and allows for dealing with migrants' lives from various perspectives. This research takes on the theory as a guiding principle to understand the experiences of migrant Pakistani women in terms of their social, economic and cultural capital.

2.8. Conclusion

This literature review has provided the background to and basis for this research. Pakistani women are often invisible in the international literature on migration. Several studies have been conducted within Pakistan to explore the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society, which is driven by strong cultural conservatism as well as religious traditionalism. Migration literature views Pakistani women as a tied mover or an appendage. Most of the cited literature concerns studies conducted in the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia and South East Asia (Bun 2006, Fijac & Sonn 2006, Harriss & Shaw 2009; Woodward 2018). These studies narrate the experiences of the Pakistani diaspora in various places. Existing literature identifies patriarchy as one of the most tenacious hurdles to the development of women in Pakistan.

The review of the literature reveals that there has been very little or no focus on migrant Pakistani women in Africa generally and South Africa particularly. It also shows that the notion of independent migration is out of the question: Pakistani women migrate with their male family members. Overall, the literature focuses on the cultural derivatives of Pakistani society and their impact on women within Pakistan. This research proposes to fill a gap in the literature by assessing the role played by culture in migrant Pakistani women's lives outside of Pakistan. The next chapter presents the research design and research methodology for the study.

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 have laid the foundation for the study. This chapter describes and presents the research design and research methods. This research used qualitative research methods to explore the role of culture in the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. The qualitative research paradigm elicits rich and broad perspectives on the phenomenon under study (Choy 2014). For my research, it is important to mention that the cultural issues faced by migrant Pakistani women in South Africa may not be apprehended statistically. The unique cultural manifestations and experiences of identity construction cannot be adequately comprehended numerically without presenting the context of specific social and cultural factors. The qualitative approach allowed me to comprehend and narrate rich descriptions from my participants.

I employed an interpretive qualitative case study research design, where I conducted semi-structured interviews to gather data. Collected data was then analysed through thematic analysis. After describing these, the chapter goes on to discuss ethical considerations as well as geographical and subjective limitations. The last section of the chapter considers the trustworthiness of the study through reflective commentary. The qualitative research approach is discussed in the next section.

3.2. The Qualitative Research Approach

The qualitative research approach focuses on people's experiences, emotions, feelings and perceptions. These aspects of human existence cannot be broken down into numbers, argue the proponents of a qualitative approach. The complexity and fluidity of real life can be subjected to research methods that accommodate the social matrix in which people are living (Rahman 2017). Moreover, people give meaning to things, events, incidents and memories. Quantitative methods attempt to represent these social features of human life numerically. By contrast, qualitative researchers delve deep into these social and psychological processes (Astalin 2003).

This study aimed to examine the challenges of the identity construction of Pakistani women in South Africa. A qualitative approach was therefore chosen to study the life experiences of these women. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to derive themes which shed light on different elements of the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. The qualitative approach was best suited to explore this topic as it allowed me to gather the narratives of women who had migrated to a new country, namely South Africa, and to interact with the participants (Denzin & Lincoln 2000).

An interpretivist approach was applied throughout the study. While describing the interpretive approach, Leitch, Hill and Harrison (2010) submit that the interpretivist paradigm emphasizes the context and understanding of individuals, as they see the world around them. This approach was used to gather information about the experiences of my participants. Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004) explain that interpretivist methodology is characterised by participation, collaboration and engagement of the researcher and the subject. In this way, the researcher is involved and engaged in interpreting and discerning the meanings given by their subjects. Myers (2009) further notes that the route to reality in an interpretivist approach is concluded through social constructions and the reflection of individuals on various phenomena. This approach helped to explore the experiences of migrant Pakistani women because it facilitated exploring different events in their lives through their subjective understanding.

The research project used a case study method. This involves an intensive study of a group to gain a comprehensive understanding. It also provides a detailed description and analysis of human experiences and processes (Yin 2002). According to Simons (2009), a case study is a detailed exploration of individuals or groups. Since the group under study are migrant Pakistani women, a single case study method was suitable for this research. George and Bennett (2005) identify the case study as a useful tool because of its high conceptual validity and that it confers the ability to closely examine the complexity of groups and individuals. This method resonated well with my research project, as migrant Pakistani women form a small group amongst migrant communities in South Africa. The case study method allowed for a thick and rich understanding of the research problem.

The next section discusses the process of selection of participants.

3.3. Selection of the Participants

As my target population is a migrant community, the selection of participants was challenging. Since, this is a minor dissertation, a small sample size was recommended. I needed eight migrant Pakistani women as participants. I categorised my participants before selection into two categories, four stay-at-home and four working women. I did this to get different angles on issues faced by migrant Pakistani women, both as stay-at-home and as working women. It also helped in gaining additional perspective on the challenges faced by migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. Being a Pakistani woman myself, I am an active participant in social gatherings of the Pakistani community. Through these gatherings, I had established contacts with the migrant Pakistani community and was able to approach some of them and asked them to take part in the study.

I predefined some characteristics of my participants to help me identify potential subjects for my research. First, they should be migrant Pakistani women, preferably first generation. Second, all my participants were married women. Other criteria for choosing my participants were the duration of their stay in South Africa, having children, and that they were either working or stay-at-home. The reason behind choosing two groups of participants was to observe and gain insight into their diverse experiences. My earlier observations about migrant Pakistani working women in South Africa illustrated that they are following both religion and culture together. They are utilising the freedom of work granted by their religion but at the same time, they are also following their culture. Two of the working participants work in private sphere while other two run their own business. They had the choice of working as cultural practices of oppressing women are relaxed in South Africa. The period of their stay in South Africa played a significant role in selecting participants; I had a participant who has been living in South Africa for more than 28 years as well as a new migrant who came just 3 years ago. The primary reason for choosing participants who were married with children is because children add to the cultural responsibility of a Pakistani woman, as they are solely responsible for their house and upbringing of the children.

For this project, I use purposive and snowball sampling for the selection of my participants, where I could approach potential participants possessing the above characteristics. I requested migrant Pakistani women staying in Pretoria or Johannesburg through the dissemination of a letter (Appendix A) inviting participation in the study. I sent a letter to the Pakistan South

Africa Association (PSAA), describing to them the purpose of my study. The resource person of PSAA connected me with his wife, and she proved to be of great help in assisting me to meet with migrant Pakistani women in the areas of Laudium and Erasmia in Pretoria, where a large concentration of the Pakistani community is found. I used a cell phone to communicate with my participants. I sent them the details regarding the study, and once they agreed to participate, I arranged to conduct the interviews in person.

Some of the main characteristics of my participants are as follows:

Table 1: Characteristics of the Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Marital Status	Year of migration	Year of migration of their husbands	Education	Employment	Number of children	Citizenship
P1	31	Married	2013	2003	B. A	Housewife	3	Pakistani
P2	47	Separated	2008	-----	Matric	Business	3	South African
P3	48	Married	1994	1991	B.A, B.Ed.	Housewife	4	South African
P4	31	Married	2015	2004	MBA	HR Manager	1	Pakistani
P5	32	Married	2010	1999	B. Com	Manager	3	South African
P6	39	Married	2003	1996	M.Sc.	Works from home	3	Pakistani
P7	30	Married	2017	2008	B. Com	Housewife	2	Pakistani
P8	51	Married	1994	1992	Post-graduate	Business	4	South African

The above table, Table 1, describes the age, year of migration, education, working status and nationality of the participants. According to the information obtained from the participants, P3

and P8 are the earliest migrants, while P7 is the latest migrant to South Africa. It also illustrates the continuity of migration from Pakistan to South Africa. All the participants are married and are living with their husbands and children. Four stay-at-home and four working women constitute the total number of eight participants for the study.

3.4. Description of the Research Sites

This study was conducted in Laudium and Erasmia, which are in and near Pretoria and Johannesburg respectively. Most of the Pakistanis in Laudium and Erasmia own small businesses such as cell phone shops, grocery shops, furniture stores and electronics businesses, while those in areas of Johannesburg are mostly doctors and well-established businesspeople. Many Pakistani migrants have established their businesses in Johannesburg. This research site was selected due to geographical proximity, as well; I live in Pretoria and often commute to Johannesburg. It suited me best to conduct my research in these twin metropolitan cities. Previously, I thought of conducting the study across major cities of South Africa, but that seemed too demanding and therefore not practical for the requirements of a minor dissertation. Furthermore, I wanted to conduct face to face interviews, taking field-notes and making observations, and this would have not been possible with long-distance interviews.

3.5. Data Collection

Access is often difficult in research that involves vulnerable populations such as migrants. Due to the sensitive nature of this study about the migrant population, collecting and handling of data is a very sensitive process. Keeping these factors in mind, data was collected in the month of March 2020, just before the lockdown in South Africa because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before commencing data collection with each participant, I explained the aim and objectives of the research. I shared the information sheet with my potential participants on WhatsApp, or by email. Some of my participants, specifically from the stay-at-home category, did not have a valid email address. In those cases, I had to use the medium of WhatsApp to share the relevant information about the research. It was done to reassure these participants that their information and responses would be meant only for this study. Moreover, it was an attempt to establish a rapport with my participants to encourage them to respond to the interview questions while feeling comfortable about their anonymity. Verbal communication also helped in explaining the purpose of the study by phone call. An information sheet explained and elucidated all the

relevant information regarding the study (Appendix B). I even read out the information sheet and explained it in Urdu³ to make it clearer and more understandable, as our communication was mainly in Urdu. Following consent from the participant, an informed consent form was signed which stated their rights as participants (Appendix C). Subsequently, data was gathered from semi-structured interviews, described in the following sub-section, combined with field notes and observations.

3.5.1. Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews are a great source of detailed information from a few participants. Kvale (1996:14) defines interviews as "as the construction site for knowledge". Therefore, in an interview setting, the researcher tries to apprehend the thoughts, opinions and points of view of participants. Interviews are an important method to collect rich data in qualitative research (Harskamp & House 2019). Semi-structured interviews consist of some structured preset questions requiring yes or no answers for demographic information (Adams 2010), while the remainder are semi-structured, open-ended questions, in which participants can answer in free flow. Semi-structured questions also determine the areas for probing in the research (Galletta 2013).

I employed semi-structured interviews to gather my research data. I conducted interviews in both English and Urdu. Since many of the Pakistani families speak Urdu at home, it was easy and my participants preferred to communicate in Urdu. I used an interview guide approved by my supervisors to conduct the semi-structured interviews (Appendix D). The interview guide consisted of two parts: the first part was composed of structured questions and the second part of semi-structured, open-ended questions. I used two separate interview guides, one for working women and one for stay-at-home women, to probe more into their life experiences. I used a cell phone to record the interviews.

Some of the participants, specifically from the stay-at-home category, did not want to be recorded, or their male partners did not grant them permission to be recorded. Participants from the working women category had no issues with being recorded. This showed the powerful role of men over women and their decisions. In these cases, when the interview was not

³ Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. All participants were fluent in and comfortable communicating in Urdu.

recorded, I took detailed notes of their replies in answer to the questions asked. Unrecorded interviews were transcribed right after the completion of the interview to make sense of the interview.

I conducted most of the interviews at the homes of my participants, as they felt comfortable there. In two cases, the husbands of my participants were also at home and they would come and see what was taking place. It was intrusive, as my participants became conscious and cautious of how they answered my questions. This also showed the domination of men over women, where they can't exercise their agency to answer some of the interview questions.

Interviews with working women were more comfortable, as they were more open to answering the questions posed than the stay-at-home participants. With stay-at-home participants, I had to do more probing, as most of their answers were simply yes or no. With the presence of children at the homes of the participants, the interview process was disturbed many times as their kids would get their attention. In one instance, one of the children of the participants tore my interview guide and consent form; luckily, I had spare copies with me.

The overall process of interviewing was interesting as all my participants had contrasting views and it was an enriching experience to learn about their life stories. The interviews were supplemented by field notes and observation.

3.5.2. Field Notes and Observation

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, I took field notes and wrote down my observations during the fieldwork. For this purpose, I took along a journal to write my observations and field notes while doing the fieldwork. It helped to make notes of the smallest things occurring around us. In some instances, my participants would say things that they did not want me to record or asked me to pause the recording so that they could tell me some specific thing. I also took notice of their facial expressions. While doing one interview, the woman broke down into tears while telling me about the challenges of her early years of settlement. I also recorded my observations about the surroundings of the area in which they were living.

The living conditions of the participants, in my observation, played a big role in how they related their life experiences. The legal documented status also shaped their opinions. The element of fear was more dominant amongst the recently migrated Pakistani women. I took

notes on how they responded to my questions. Descriptive notes were helpful in cases of unrecorded interviews. I also took note of the levels of participation of my interviewees, as they were more enthusiastic to answer some of the questions than others. I also observed the facial expressions of the participants, which I noted during the interviews. Field notes and observations, along with the interviews, provided data for the analysis.

3.6. Transcription of the Interviews

After completing the fieldwork and conducting all the interviews, it was time to transcribe the interviews. I transcribed the data into a Word document. As most of the interviews were done in Urdu, I translated them into English. Transcribing the interviews, myself helped me to relive the narration of the life experiences of my interviewees. It took an average of five to six hours to transcribe a recorded interview and an additional two hours to proofread. I listened to the audios repeatedly to reduce any errors while transcribing. The use of the words or phrases um, you know, you see, and all right were omitted in the transcripts. For an unrecorded interview, I transcribed it by using the detailed notes I took during the interview. Unrecorded interviews were transcribed on the same day as the interviews and their transcription was started soon after the completion of the interview.

3.7. Data Analysis

After the collection of data, it was analysed using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006:6) state that “thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. Different themes, such as the reasons for migration, similarities and differences between living in South Africa and Pakistan, forms of belonging and so on were identified from the collected data, coded and grouped to link them to the research problem. The main aim of the data analysis was to discover the emerging patterns and themes from the data. I concentrated on the whole data set first, then categorised it. This categorisation helped me to make comparisons and draw out contrasts amongst different patterns and themes. Upon reflection, the complexity of patterns made sense. Identified categories were defined, named and reviewed, thus producing analysis of the data.

3.8. Ethical Considerations in the Study

Qualitative research often has more ethical challenges due to the face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the participant and observations during the process of data collection (Gillman 2000). Ethical considerations safeguard participants from any harm during research. Lammers (2007) writes that good research is conducted with responsibility and a positive attitude. To bring this factor in, ethical clearance, which gave the authorisation to commence with data collection. (Appendix F), was granted from the University of Johannesburg before the start of fieldwork,

I assured participants of anonymity. However, in the case of a small population group, the identity of the participant cannot be hidden by just changing the name. I named my participants Participant 1 to Participant 8. I ensured the active participation of my participants so that they could tell me if there was something in conversation that they did not want me to record or write down. I explained to them that the information obtained from them would only be used for my MA dissertation to get a degree from the University of Johannesburg.

In line with the ethical guidelines, my participants were treated in the best possible manner so that they did not feel uncomfortable or hesitant to express their opinions. Transcripts and signed letters of informed consent were kept safe to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. Participants had the right to discontinue their participation in the study.

As mentioned earlier that in some instances the husbands of my participants were at home during the interviews, they also viewed and read the information sheet and informed consent form, however during the interviews, I requested them to have a one-on-one interview with my participants so that privacy can be assured. Confidentiality was maintained in terms of the identities of the participants. Numbered names have been used to refer to the information provided by the participants, as mentioned above. The data will be kept safe in a computer with an encrypted password for five years and will be readily available upon request of the participants if they feel the need to review or access it. The information gathered from the participants was used for research purposes only. Participants were informed that there would be no direct benefit of any kind before the interviews.

3.9. The Trustworthiness of the Research and Reflexivity

Maintaining the trustworthiness of the research is often challenging. I tried to maintain the credibility of my research by taking the following steps.

Reflective commentary is a tool in maintaining the trustworthiness of the research. Reflective commentary is the researcher's own evaluation and re-evaluation of the research (Shenton 2004:68). It also deals with the construction of one's ideas, which are vital for the credibility of the research. I recorded my initial expressions and thoughts about the research. A careful evaluation of the patterns generated from the analysis of the data was performed. Another major element in reflective commentary was continuous monitoring of myself. I took notes of how I felt before, during and after an interview. I aimed to make sure to keep identifying myself in the research project. While conducting the interviews, I kept notes of the things that I could relate to, such as some of the cultural practices carried out by my participants and how I felt about those practices.

Although reflexivity is drawn upon in the whole chapter, this section particularly highlights my reflexivity: my positionality as a UJ student, a married Pakistani woman and a mother of a girl child. Being a Pakistani woman and researching Pakistani women comes with its advantages and disadvantages. My positionality brought a sense of belonging and sharing with my participants. Pakistani women are hard to access, and their husbands play a big role in their inaccessibility. I knew that I needed to be heedful of how I dressed while visiting my participants. I made sure that I was wearing a Pakistani dress with a scarf. I had in mind that I might get swifter access to my participants with my head covered and wearing a Pakistani dress. Dressing in this way helped to eliminate any objection or criticism owing to my attire from the husbands or male members of my participants' families. This led to more acceptance, especially in the Muslim areas of Laudium and Erasmia.

I had a sense of insider status while conducting the fieldwork as I belong to this community in terms of race, colour and culture and religion. My multiple identities kept on mixing throughout the fieldwork. For instance, I did not feel at liberty to ask follow-up questions of my older participants, as the element of respect kept on lingering. Even when they questioned me about how I view my culture, I had to show regard and swifter reply while answering them owing to my younger age. When I was interviewing one of my participants, there came talk of the *Aurat*

March⁴. She thought that maybe I was a women activist or supporter of *Aurat* March. I later explained to her that I was conducting my study for my Master's degree and that I respect all the good things about my culture.

There was a visible difference in interviewing the two categories of my participants, namely stay-at-home and working women. I found working women to be more confident, vocal and expressive. They were open to discussing the problems they faced. The stay-at-home women were shy and quiet and afraid of saying anything that their husbands might not like. It is also worth mentioning here that when I was contacting migrant Pakistani women for participation, some of the women said "*Mery bandy ko acha ni lgay ga k mein interview don*" ("My husband won't like it that I give an interview"), and "*Hum tou gharelo khwateen hi hain, hum kiya bataengy*" ("We are mere stay-at-home, what will we tell you?") In contrast, working women gave positive responses and acknowledged that academic research is important.

It is also worth mentioning that I had to talk to the husbands of two participants for formal permission, as requested by my participants. I had to explain to their husbands the purpose and motive behind my study. They were also concerned about the recording and the use of personal information. I assured them there would be no audio recording and no revealing any personal information. As mentioned previously, it also highlighted the power dynamics in a Pakistani household where men overpower the decision making of women. Although there are progressive perspectives on Pakistani women gaining freedom and autonomy, patriarchy continues to hinder this perspective in reality. Had their husbands not allowed them to be interviewed, these women would not have participated in the study.

My multiple identities assisted my acceptance by and access to my participants. Had I not been married, had I not been a mother, it would have been very difficult for me to get access to my participants. My positionality as the spouse of a diplomat opened up access for me but it did not play any leading role in convincing women to participate in my study, as many women refused to participate. It was a learning experience that elicited a sense of belonging while conducting my interviews with migrant Pakistani women. My identity as a mother led to

⁴ The *Aurat* March is a demonstration held, since 2018, on every international women's day in Pakistan across different cities. This march is characterised by bold women's right statements, raising debates in various sections of the patriarchal society of Pakistan.

acceptance and acknowledgment amongst my participants. It also played a pronounced role in how my participants viewed me.

3.10. Conclusion

The chapter started with the exploration of the qualitative method use in the study. After the selection of participants, through the use of semi-structured interviews, data was collected in Pretoria and Johannesburg from eight migrant Pakistani women. Interviews with the participants and observations during the field work generated enough data for the study, which was analysed using the thematic analysis. The analysis of gathered data yielded themes and subthemes. Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the research. Establishment of the trustworthiness and reflexivity of the researcher concluded this chapter. The next chapter discusses the main findings of the study.



Chapter 4

Post-Migration Cultural Identity of Migrant Pakistani Women: Discussion of Findings

4.1. Introduction

This study sought to examine views of Pakistani migrant women in South Africa, an almost invisible group of women in the South African context. The study explored the complex and intricate role of culture in identity construction across spatial and cultural boundaries. Hence, migratory journeys were recalled to understand the experiences before and after migration. Migrant Pakistani women proudly carry their cultural and religious identities in South Africa. This study utilises the key dimensions of habitus, which are different forms of capital as described by Bourdieu (1986). Along with the transformation in the habitus, cultural capital signifies a strong bond with the home country. The intricate and complex role of culture positively influences the identity construction processes of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

This chapter is based on the participants' accounts of their personal and social experiences after migrating to South Africa. Two groups of participants reflected on their different experiences as working and stay-at-home migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. An analysis of their accounts generated themes such as migratory experiences, the role of culture, forms of belonging to Pakistan, and reconstruction of identities. The narratives of my participants underpin their specific experiences after migration to South Africa; they do not represent all Pakistani women living in South Africa. To keep the identity of my interviewees anonymous, I refer to them as numbered participants instead of using pseudonyms, to protect their identities. Since the migrant Pakistani community is small in South Africa, and due to the commonality of names among Pakistani women, there was a risk that pseudonyms would not be able to provide anonymity. Hence participants are referred as P1 to P8 in a numbered format.

4.2. The Migratory Experiences of Pakistani Women

People migrate to improve the quality of their lives. Different socio-economic and political factors are drivers for migration. Migration in pursuit of better economic opportunities and family reunification are common forms of migration from Pakistan (Singh 2015). While exploring the migratory experiences of my participants during the research interviews, the most frequently stated motive for migration to South Africa was to join their husbands, who were already settled and working here.

The trend of migration from Pakistan is for men to migrate first, to settle in a new country and make arrangements concerning job and living prospects. Since my participants were all married women, it was important to take into account how their families viewed their migration decision. The in-laws of Participant 1 were unhappy with her move to South Africa. She describes her experience of living with in-laws in Pakistan as follows: *“I was living with my in-laws and it was not easy”* (Participant 1, Interview, March 13th, 2020). Even after migration, she narrated, her in-laws have a strong influence on her life here; they question everything she does here. They kept on asking her to come back to Pakistan. For the participant, migration was an opportunity to escape from her in-laws and to live with her husband. She narrated that her father still wants her to come back to Pakistan but because of her in-laws, she does not want to go back. Similar findings were made in the studies of Nosheen (2011) and Akhter (2011), where gender roles and domestic responsibilities coupled with the status of daughter-in-law pose difficulties for women in Pakistan. The rest of the participants reflected that their families were supportive of their decision to migrate to South Africa.

Participant 8, who had been working in Pakistan, gave her reason for arriving in South Africa as follows: *“My husband was living and working here, so I came to South Africa, I came here, after getting married to him,”* (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020). Participant 8 expressed an emotional connection to South Africa as, even after moving to other countries such as the United States and Saudi Arabia, she wanted to come back and settle in South Africa.

While most of the participants came for family reunification, Participant 2, a businesswoman, did not; she migrated primarily for business purposes. She viewed South Africa as a land of opportunity to expand her business. The husbands of my other participants migrated well before their marriages. Their migration was primarily for economic opportunities. The narratives of my participants from the working women category suggested that they were

working in their pre and post migration life, while the stay-at-home women remained as stay-at-home women as they were in Pakistan. Two of the working participants undertook specialised courses after migration to South Africa, which has opened up opportunities for better employment.

4.3. The Supportive Role of a Spouse in Post-Migration Life

All eight participants in my study elaborated that there had been a significant change in their lives after migration. Since migration, there has been a reversal of gender relations at home for these women. Their husbands have not only been supportive but also changed themselves to adjust to life in a post migration context, where they can no longer expect their wives to work in the kitchen all day. Migration transformed the mind-sets and perspectives of their husbands, because of which they enjoy equality in the household, but at the same time, they prefer the dominance of men in certain aspects of their lives according to religious and cultural norms.

4.3.1. Narratives of Working Women

During the interviews with the working women, they emphasised their husbands' support for work after migration to South Africa. When asked her opinion about family support for her working, she replied, "*My parents are very open-minded; they always wanted me to work.*" Participant 4 grew up in a modern city, Karachi. She had the opportunity to attain higher education and be an independent, working woman. But the same was not the case for Participant 2, who married young and could not complete her studies. Her in-laws did not look kindly on her working and were prescriptive because of religious dictates. Her family did not support her right to work and fulfil her ambitions in life.

Participant 8 said that, along with the support, the dominance of men and inequality in the household is important to sustain the dominant status of the men of the house. According to her:

In my experience, I am an educated woman and a working woman and I feel and believe that the dominance of men is very important and I will never do anything if my husband says that he does not like it. I think it is the beauty of our culture, there has to be a balance. But men and women work in their ways, men can't do what women do and so is the women. Because he has been made superior by God. Besides, I think women must enjoy this because many of the decision-making

burdens go away by this. Therefore, I say that women must enjoy this (inequality).

(Participant 8, Interview March 28th, 2020)

For some migrant women, the past is strong and predominant, and they cling to gender specifications within their homes so that cultural practices can be followed. Andrews and Shahrokni (2014:153) call this a “patriarchal bargain”, which gives a sense of protection and salvation to these migrant women. Mahomed (2014) in her study about educated South African Indian mothers found that instilled cultural identities, coupled with gendered norms, result in the negotiation of their careers. Due to their cultural traditions and values, these women preferred to stay at home and raise their kids, further stating that because of the continuous revisiting of their cultural identities, they feel comfortable fulfilling their duties as mothers and housewives. In line with her findings, I also found that stay-at-home educated migrant Pakistani women in my study also preferred looking after their homes and negotiated their identities as housewives rather than pursuing their careers. Participant 8 was of the view that she had great support for her working as she came from a very open-minded family. Similarly, Participant 5 admired her husband’s encouragement: *"My husband is very supportive. That's why I have been working for ten years now"*(Participant 5, Interview, March 12th, 2020).

With the support of her family, Participant 5 was able to work and manage her home. While praising the role of her husband, she also reflected that employment after migration had broadened her view of the world. The narratives of the participants - both working women participants and stay-at-home participants - showed that their husbands had been a source of great help in post-migration life. The following section describes the family support narrative for stay-at-home migrant Pakistani women.

4.3.2. Narratives of Stay-at-home Women

Some participants acknowledged patriarchy and its influence on women in Pakistan. But, after migration to South Africa, evidence of patriarchy within their households was negligible; the patriarchal landscape in South Africa has changed for them. Participants validated that, in Pakistan, things are still traditional and conservative when it comes to women and their role in the household. Participant 3 confirmed that:

Those who live in Pakistan, it's still the old mind set; however, once they are outside Pakistan, they become very cooperative and supportive. [In South Africa] My

husband helped me in raising the children, I never felt that I do not have any support from him; he helped me with house chores also. (Participant 3, Interview, March 11th, 2020)

Stay-at-home participants expressed that their husbands assisted them in household chores when and if necessary, it is unlike Pakistan where men do not help women or take part in any household activity. In Pakistani society, gender roles are ascribed to men and women, as per narratives of the participants, migration has brought a sense of freedom from the rigid ascribed gender roles. It was particularly visible in working women category as they felt less pressure to adhere to the gender roles.

4.4. The Role of Culture amongst Migrant Pakistani Women in South Africa

The study focuses on social identities based on race, gender, social class and ethnicities, which amalgamate to form an individual's experiences of and perceptions about the world around them. The participants shared some interesting insights on religion and culture. There was an appreciation of being a Pakistani, and a sense of pride about it. Material culture refers to the objects and belongings of humans. It includes everything that can be felt and perceived by sensory human faculties and holds a physical space (Woodward 2007). Migrant Pakistani women demonstrate their material culture in a variety of ways from dresses to a prayer mat to cooking utensils which come from Pakistan, these material objects reintroduce their non-material cultural beliefs of belonging to Pakistan. Within the physical space of my participant's homes, decor items like vases, teacups and wall hangings reflected material cultural objects which surround their non-material beliefs. Moreover, they considered the culture of Pakistan as a factor distinguishing them from others. Their cultural identity has not changed much for them after migration to South Africa. Participant 4 articulated that: *"I identify myself more [as] a Pakistani. Because I was born there and I look like Pakistani; I love Pakistan"* (Participant 4, Interview, March 18th, 2020).

She was very frank about her expression of identity as a Pakistani, and even sang a national song when I asked her about identity. Similarly, Participant 8, a 51-year-old working woman, proudly elaborated:

We make Pakistani food, all my children speak Urdu, and they can write Urdu although they have never lived in Pakistan. They know Urdu poetry, Urdu songs. I don't think... only when I leave my house, I think that I am not in Pakistan, otherwise within the confinement of the house, I think that I am living in Pakistan.

(Participant 8, Interview March 28th, 2020)

Evident from her statement is that her cultural identity is strongly rooted in Pakistan. Although her children are living outside Pakistan, she ensures that she passes on language and values to her children to impart a fundamental cultural distinction to them. She even showed me her South African passport, showing Pakistan as her country of birth. She vigorously kept her finger there and said, "*That's where my heart is*" (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020)

Similarly, Participant 4 claimed that her identity is derived from her culture:

At home, we speak the Urdu language; whenever at [a] friend's place we do not wear western but our eastern clothes, shalwar kameez; we talk in Urdu, make Pakistani food. Therefore, it is more that we are driven towards our culture.

(Participant 4, Interview, March 18th, 2020)

The cultural practices hence constitute a pull factor for the primary identity of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. The understanding and feelings of the participants about their identities nuanced their accounts of their religious and cultural identities. My findings also suggest that religious and cultural identities are inseparable for them. Some of them considered religion as a segment of culture and culture as a segment of religion.

Participant 8 did not have a different opinion when asked about maintaining the culture in South Africa. For her, it is impossible to be a Pakistani and not follow the Pakistani culture. She explained this as follows:

I think ours is an extraordinarily strong culture and its flavour is so strong that I can never imagine eliminating it from my life. Pakistani culture is more dominated by Islam. (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020).

She articulated Islam as a primary marker of her identity. She indicated that the religion followed by Pakistani culture plays a central role in her everyday life in South Africa. She also

reflected that culture and religion are inseparable for her, but she views religion as a progressive element of her life.

Participants in my study indicated that culture is an integral part of their lives. The working women narrated that they did not meet any problems with practicing their religion and culture at their workplaces. They tend to preserve cultural identity through their cultural practices. These cultural practices reflected in their identities. From the interviews it appeared that all eight of my participants felt a strong cultural link, as well as a responsibility to keep up familial connections to the mother country of Pakistan.

All the participants held staunch opinions about the importance of maintaining their own culture in South Africa. These cultural practices form the basis for their cultural capital, which not only empowers them with a distinct identity in post-migration life but also implicates the need to hold on to their cultural roots. But migrant working Pakistani women amalgamate their cultural capital with religious freedom to empower themselves, which in turn has a positive influence on their post-migration lives. Their cultural capital not only shapes their post-migration life but also strengthens their agency and inform them to construct and reshape their existing identities. This interplay of cultural, economic and social capital enhances their ability and preparedness for constructing identities in South Africa.

4.4.1. Significance of Religion in the Culture of Pakistan

All of the participants for the study identified themselves as Muslim. The majority of Pakistan's population is Muslim. A careful analysis of the narratives of the participants reveals that Islam plays the most significant role in the identity of migrant Pakistani women. Religion and culture are closely interlinked in Pakistan, and hence the basis for the identity of its inhabitants as well. The self-identification of my participants as Muslims and Pakistani stems from the strength of their religious and cultural identity.

As Participant 4 pointed out,

I am a Muslim, so I would say that I am a Muslim and I am rightly proud of my identity, so I would rather not lose my identity to be somebody who I am not, so I am a proud Pakistani and a proud Muslim so I want to hold on to my identity.

(Participant 4, Interview, March 18th, 2020)

Similarly, Participant 7 put it like this:

I identify myself as a Muslim Pakistani. It is important for me that my religious identity is never compromised at any place. I don't mind being called Muslim South African but my identity as Muslim comes first - as it is evident from my scarf also.

(Participant 7, Interview March 10th, 2020)

This excerpt from Participant 7 summarises the importance of religion as a source of strength for her identity. All the participants identified themselves as moderate Muslims. They visit mosques occasionally and offer their prayers at home. Six out of eight participants stated that migration to South Africa has brought them closer to their religion. For the working women, they revealed that they take time off to offer prayers⁵ at the workplace. They also narrated that their colleagues accommodated their requests for halal food options at formal working lunches. It was worth noting that these practices reflect that work places in South Africa are more tolerant and respectful of other religions. It also reiterates the narrative that my participants never faced discrimination based on their religion in South Africa.

This finding also resonates with the research of Law (2000), who examined how Muslim immigrants, after migration, tend to keep their religious identity as their primary identity. Similarly, Pakistani immigrants, compared to Muslim immigrants from other countries, also stress their self-identification as Muslims. My study also found that migrant Pakistani women in South Africa asserted their religious identity more than their cultural identity, which gives them more control and a sense of strength to their identity.

Similarly, Vahed (2014) revealed in his study that Zanzibari Muslim women in South Africa committed to following Islam more religiously than ever before, adding that the identity of Muslim women should not be interpreted from their religion only. There is a complex interplay of race, religion and culture, as well as geographical factors, which influence the socially constructed identities of Muslim women. In line with this, Moodley (2018) found that migrant Muslim women in Fordsburg, South Africa, freely construct their identities in line with Islamic teachings, which provides them a sense of belonging which is intimately linked to their identity.

Boomberg (2014) also notes that modern Muslim women in South Africa have using-economic factors to deconstruct their stereotypical identity. They view themselves as progressive and

⁵ Muslims offer prayers five times a day.

active participants in society. Their self-determined identity as modern Muslim women enables them to access broader society. This study by Boomberg (2014) becomes relevant as participants in my study also presented themselves as modern Muslim women and carry both *deen aur duniya* (religion coupled with socio cultural values) in their everyday life.

Bourdieu (1990) defines field as an objective real entity having boundaries and oppositions, in this context field can be referred as a home or centre of belonging. Hence religion as a primary marker of migrant Pakistani women's identity creates a religious field for them which evokes a sense of belonging and influences their thoughts and conduct. Similarly, for the participants in my study, migration brought them closer to their religion, as they not only enjoy religious freedom in South Africa but also practiced their religion in a better manner, as they follow Islam more religiously here in South Africa than in Pakistan.

4.4.2. Strategies to Preserve Social and Cultural Capital

Every culture has its elements of attraction for its followers. Migrant Pakistani women have their ways of maintaining their culture in South Africa. Participants said that they felt the urge to connect and follow their culture more strongly after migration as it gives them a sense of distinct identity and belonging. It made them feel happy and satiated.

All eight participants had shared this opinion when I inquired about the cultural practices. Some of their reflections are:

I think, after coming to South Africa, I feel closer to Pakistani culture; I miss that, I have been born and raised in Pakistan so I think I have all those things which a normal Pakistani person would have, an individual would have; so I carry them along and I hope that my daughters also carry it the same way. (Participant 4, Interview, March 18th, 2020)

Since many aspects of my life are very well connected to Pakistan, so I think after the migration these cultural linkages and this cultural bond have become very strong now. I enjoy it because although we are not in Pakistan there is so much connection to Pakistan of everything that we do here. (Participant 6, Interview, March 22nd, 2020)

In other words, they described culture as an asset and not as a burden. Pakistani culture is also composed of such elements as its own attire, food, and social gatherings around religious and cultural festivals.

The formation of trust and cooperation amongst individuals of a society is important for the development of society. Flap and Volker (2004) state that there are different forms of social capital due to understanding it multidimensionally. The social capital of bonding refers to the interaction between people of similar groups, and it strengthens the identities of homogenous groups. Bridging is the interaction between migrants and host society actors to share and influence. Social capital denotes the link between migrants and people who are in higher positions in the host country.

A closer look at the participant's narratives in response to the changes in their post-migration social and cultural life reveals that participants expressed that their lives have not transformed drastically in comparison to how they were living in Pakistan. However, their narratives are consistent with the various forms of social and cultural capital as they show bonding in the form of social community gatherings to strengthen their identities as migrant Pakistanis in South Africa. They continue the process of bridging between host population and themselves to share values. Similarly, they exhibit dense forms of social capital as they regularly visit their Pakistani friends to have food. This signifies the importance of food as a medium of forming and strengthening social networks, which in turn solidifies their social capital. Their connection with their own culture through different mediums depicts the gravity of culture in their lives outside of Pakistan. Their responses reflected their upbringing, in which cultural values were deeply rooted.

The following elements of culture were repeatedly mentioned in the interviews.

4.4.2.1. Dressing in National Attire

Attire is often paramount when it comes to the exhibition of culture. Dressing up in national attire is the most important element for connecting to your own culture and the identity of its followers. *Shalwar kameez* is the national dress of Pakistan and is worn by the majority of the population of Pakistan. Dressing choices in the host country after migration are influenced by many factors such as weather and the host population's attitude towards the migrant's culture.

For my participants, dress choice was influenced by personal, religious, cultural and husbands' choices:

I wear the burqa [Full body cover Islamic dress] and niqab [face cover]; at home, I wear shalwar kameez - I am not allowed to wear jeans trousers or any other Western dress. (Participant 1, Interview, March 13th, 2020)

Participant 5 added that her husband wants her to wear loose dresses, which are long enough to cover herself properly. All of the participants are Muslim and do not believe in exposing their bodies by wearing short dresses. The widely held opinion of the participants was that they liked to wear *shalwar kameez* as they felt comfortable in it, but at the same time, they did not mind wearing Western dresses. Participant 6 said that she wanted to remain within her cultural-religious boundaries when it came to dressing to keep her identity. She said it did not matter if she was wearing a Western or Eastern dress, but it had to be inclined towards her cultural and religious boundaries.

All the participants were very clear in their choice of dress - *shalwar kameez* - when they wanted to visit mosques or Pakistani friends and to attend community gatherings. For some, it could be the worst nightmare to go to a Pakistani gathering wearing Western dress, as they become guardians of their culture in the host country after the migration. However, the responses of the participants about dress choice within religious and cultural boundaries, along with a sense of comfort in national attire, reflected their preferences rather than an obligation. Out of eight participants, only two participants wear a *hijab* (head cover) while the rest wear *dupata*⁶ on their shoulders and sometimes on their heads, which is the general trend in urban cities of Pakistan. Hence, dressing in national attire is one of the main strategies employed by migrant Pakistani women in South Africa to remain integrated into the Pakistani community as well as keeping their distinctive identity in South Africa. As religion of Islam requires Muslim women to cover their bodies, cautiously reproducing the same dress code worn by women in Pakistan reflects an adherence to a culturally shared social classification. Bourdieu (1990) refers to 'body' as a device of cultural imprinting. While denoting the link between cognitive dispositions of habitus and physical manifestations of tools and practices that form our corporeality, Bourdieu (1984: 437) describes it as 'bodily-hexis' since our bodies manifest the dispositions of habitus. In line with this, the dress code for migrant Pakistani women is still

⁶ *Dupata* is longer than a normal headscarf. While scarves can be different in colours, a *duppatta* has to have the same colour and print as rest of the dress.

same in South Africa as the knowledge of carrying their bodies in Islamic dressing refers to their cultural context. While wearing the headscarf is similar to other Muslim women in South Africa, many of the Pakistani women drape their scarves or *dupata* loosely either on their shoulders or around the neck as Pakistani women do in urban areas of Pakistan. Although all the participants preferred to wear Pakistani dress, working women wore formal trousers and knee length shirts at their work places.

4.4.2.2. Food as a Bond to Culture

Another important means to keep connected to one's culture is food. Pakistani food is famous for its mild spices and aromas. Roti (wheat flatbread) is a staple food for Pakistani people in Pakistan. After migration, the food choices are often subject to the availability of specific food items in the host country. All the participants strictly adhere to religious dictates and consume only halal food. Participants were very happy to inform me that never had any problems with finding their spices in South Africa.

Participants mentioned that they regularly visit Fordsburg, a suburb in Johannesburg, and Laudium, a township in Pretoria. There is a large concentration of South Asian migrants in these areas (Rugunanan 2017). Participants showed a lot of excitement and enthusiasm about visiting Laudium and Fordsburg. They reported that visits to these places reminded them of Pakistan. They buy halaal food items and spices from there. They also visit Indian and Pakistani restaurants to have traditional food. They were of the view that food choices had not changed for them and their families after migration and stated as:

Very important, food is the centre of parties, since we do not drink or do any other things like gambling etc., so lunches and dinners with the friends are the only way of all social gatherings, so our activities revolve around food. (Participant 5, Interview, March 12th, 2020)

I cook Pakistani food all the time. We love Pakistani food. I need my roti every day and so do my children. They love Pakistani food. (Participant 6, Interview, March 22nd, 2020)

The interviews with my participants revealed that they were of the view that cooking helped them to reclaim their importance in the household. Although both categories of my sample cook and eat Pakistani food, working women did not cook traditional Pakistani food, which

takes a lot of time, because of their work routine. Two of the working women participants had a full-time house help who cooked South African and Pakistani dishes for them, since they trained their helpers to cook Pakistani food. Vallianatos and Raine (2008) suggest the importance of cuisine for maintaining cultural and traditional belonging to the country of origin. Puwar and Raghuram (2003) noted that women from South Asia are portrayed as facing the traditional barriers of looking after the household and raising children; however, they argue, South Asian women enjoy the traditional role as a woman because they feel a sense of comfort and pleasure in fulfilling their roles as homemakers.

Women participants in my study also mentioned that they cook Pakistani food all the time, which is a reassertion that food is not only of significance in the lives of Pakistani families but also has a central place in the identity of Pakistani women, as their best-cooked dish becomes a source of fame within the Pakistani community. It also evokes a sense of identity. Jagganath (2017), while exploring the food preferences of Indian expatriate families in South Africa, found that food is a way to reassert ethnic and religious identity. Similarly the kitchen becomes a creative space for the women of the house to practice their food skills, referred to as “culinary capital” by LeBesco and Naccarato (2008: 236). After migration, this culinary capital becomes greater than food and fosters a sense of identity. Likewise, participants in my study also elaborated that they happily prepare their food, which distinguishes them from others.

My findings also carve out a new insight for research about women who willingly take the responsibility of maintaining culture and traditions after migration. These traditional practices not only remind them of their home country but also give them a comforting sense of belonging, which is a key element of cultural capital. One of the participants was kind enough to show me her excellent cooking skills by preparing *nan khatai* (a typical Pakistani biscuit) with a warm cup of tea. It evoked a sense of comfort and nostalgia for Pakistan. So cooking the cuisine of the home country recreates a sense of belonging and identity for the women in my study.

4.4.2.3. Community Gatherings

Migrants often feel comfortable among their community as they all share a common sense of belonging to the same country, the same culture and the same race (Anderson 2011). South Africa has a large Pakistani diaspora. The participants of this study were also of the view that community gatherings reconnect them to their culture and their country. Participants attend and

celebrate religious and cultural festivals. Participants were excited to share their experiences of going out to community gatherings:

We have many Pakistani social gatherings, weddings also. I celebrate all of my cultural and religious things here. We have a grand Eid function, so it is not that big of a change but yes, we do miss family here. But we have so many gatherings here that I don't really miss my family a lot. (Participant 6, Interview, March 22nd, 2020)

Celebration of cultural events and community gatherings are not only a source of interaction among migrant Pakistanis in South Africa, but also strengthen their identity and community ties in South Africa. Community gatherings influence their socialization process after migration, as they feel comfortable in interacting within their own community. For the homemakers in this study, the participants mentioned that they attended all community gatherings and dinner parties. By contrast, the working women of the study could only attend a few of the big gatherings owing to their work routine.

Jinnah (2006) focused on the importance of social networks for migrant Pakistanis. They feel comfortable and revive their national culture through seeking security and comfort within the Pakistani community. Consequently, the social capital of migrant Pakistanis plays a central role in their settlement in South Africa. The community gatherings also mark such interactions, in which migrant Pakistani women, using their social and cultural capital, form new linkages to broaden their social network in South Africa after migration.

4.5. Forms of Belonging: Cultural Linkages to Pakistan

My participants emphasised that they have a strong connection to their homeland, which is Pakistan. Belonging refers to the collective identity of the group of migrants (Larrucea 2015). This term is appropriate to use here because the participants expressed it in various forms. Belonging constitutes a significant part of the identity of migrant Pakistani women as they reflect a great sense of attachment to Pakistan.

As Participant 7 asserted, *"Our roots are in Pakistan and we should be where our roots are, Pakistan is a land of love and respect for me, our families are there, my heart is there."* Her response depicted a strong sense of connectedness and belonging to Pakistan.

Participant 8 said:

In my true opinion, I think we should never have moved from Pakistan in the first place. Because when you leave your country, you lose a lot of things, in my opinion, it should have never happened, if it is my choice I would like that when we retire, I and my husband, I go back to Pakistan, give free education there, make a free hospital for people and live in a small peaceful village. Maybe I am not too sure that we can do this or what will happen. But I just told you my dream that I dream this way when we reach that stage. (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020)

Participant 8 longed to go back to Pakistan and settle there for the rest of the life, but she also reflected on the financial situation, which could make it impossible to do so. However, her emotional connection to the homeland continuously reminds her of going back to Pakistan. Migrants' aspirations for bondedness, connectedness and affinity to their culture are often manifested in their desire to go back to their own country, their own home. Nostalgic feelings about their original roots might change over time, but the "home" country remains an emotional space for migrants.

Vischer (2007) notes that "home" is also a physical space where cultural ties, association, closeness, inclusion and identities were formed. It takes time to create such a space in the host country after migration. For migrants, maintaining culture in the host land and maintaining cultural linkages with the home country to keep their culture alive is of utmost importance. Anderson (2011), who states that the lives of migrants revolve around their roots, can also compare it to the concept of a "reference point". Similarly, my participants mentioned that through their cultural practices, they were well connected to Pakistan.

The following are some of the elements for remaining connected to Pakistani culture which were communicated by my participants.

4.5.1. Visiting Pakistan

Visits to the homeland are essential to keep the cultural roots and heritage alive in migrants. Participants visit Pakistan to meet their families. They visit to attend weddings and funerals of their near and dear ones. Visiting Pakistan can also be seen as strengthening their belonging to the land of Pakistan. All but one participant visits Pakistan regularly to reconnect with their homeland. Participant 4 summarised her visit to Pakistan:

I think it is very overwhelming - you have less time and you have lots of activity to do since you meet your parents, so you need to spend more time with them, your siblings, in-laws – so less time on hand, and you need to give time to everyone so it is like you need to spend time for shopping and all of those things so it is overwhelming kind of feeling. (Participant 4, Interview, March 18th, 2020)

Participant 4 expressed her visit to Pakistan as renewing social and cultural ties. However, for Participant 5, visiting Pakistan does not bring immense pleasure anymore as it used to:

I don't enjoy it there now. When I go there, after visiting my parents and after meeting them I get bore[d] within days and I want to come back here in South Africa to my own home - a lot, there is inflation over there and people seem to be so busy in their lives. (Participant 5, Interview March 22nd, 2020)

The above-mentioned account highlights that Participant 5 considers Pakistan as a heritage to visit, but over the years of living in South Africa, she has become habituated to certain norms, which she does not find in Pakistan. All the participants in the study mentioned that they have made a home in Pakistan which is like their holiday home. This act of building a home in Pakistan is consistent with Bivand's (2012) interpretation of a migrant's home as a "physical manifestation" of their belonging to the land of Pakistan. Similarly, Dalakoglou (2010) sees it as "proxy" presence of migrants in their country of origin as well as hypothetical alternatives in case they ever return to Pakistan.

Drawing from the findings, most of the participants considered visiting Pakistan to be a source of happiness and connectivity to their culture. But working women did not get to spend a lot of time back in Pakistan due to a limited amount of time as they had to return to South Africa to resume work. Their visits to Pakistan reminded their children of deep connectedness to Pakistan and rejuvenated their Pakistani identities. For instance, their sense of belonging to Pakistan becomes stronger after each visit. But at the same time, living in Pakistan cannot be compared to the comforts of living in South Africa.

4.5.2. Expecting their Children to Marry Back in Pakistan

Marriages in Pakistani culture have a much larger role than a personal one. Marriage is viewed as a social compact, which joins two families or tribes (Ahmad, Farooq & Kayani 2015). To

keep the traditions and culture alive, migrants from Pakistan tend to marry within their community to ensure the continuity of their traditions.

During interviews, I specifically asked a question about their preference for having their children marry in South Africa or Pakistan. Seven out of eight participants preferred Pakistan. Participant 2 had her only daughter married in Pakistan. The rest of the participants stressed the need to marry within a Muslim community, followed by a strong opinion for marrying within their own Pakistani culture. Participant 8 gave an interesting answer to the question:

I would always prefer and love that my children would marry in my religion and preferably from a Pakistani background. Comfortable in my community, in my own culture, I think that the best thing to happen to someone, then you do not have many challenges, otherwise you do have many challenges. (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020)

Participant 8 also said that there is an even greater need to keep the traditions alive by keeping her links to her country. This resonates well with the findings of a study in Australia by Malik (2009), who says that women act as a crucible for maintaining culture and traditions in the host country after migration since the women of the house are considered responsible for keeping the cultural values alive by raising the next generation.

Similarly, other participants held the view that their children should marry in their own culture, within their community. In contrast to other participants' views, Participant 4 stated:

I think it is unjustified to force the children to marry back in Pakistan if you are living here; you are enjoying the life here since they grow here, they should get an opportunity to be here in South Africa and to choose a partner here in South Africa; the least we can expect of them is that they should marry the Muslims, otherwise Pakistan culture is like what we know. (Participant 4, Interview, March 18th, 2020)

She reiterated that marrying within the community does not necessarily serve the purpose if you know the positives and negatives of your own culture and community. She expressed a sense of comfort that her daughter should get married to a Muslim. Unlike other participants expressed views, the above excerpt reflects change within the migrant Pakistani community, where acceptance of different communities is gaining importance and acceptance.

Studies such as Lee's (2008) and Vertovec's (2009) suggest that the transnational links of migrants' children with their parent's homeland become weak over time. Participants expressed different transnational linkage patterns to Pakistan. Participants not only kept their children connected back to Pakistani identity through language, dress and so on but also expect them to marry back in Pakistan so that the transnational connection with their parents' homeland can become stronger. It also implies the incorporation of the parents' culture into their lives.

In my study, the participants' responses highlight a strong cultural influence on the lives of migrant Pakistanis as they trust in marrying their children to a Pakistani; in this way, the continuity of traditions can be preserved generation after generation, and the spouse from Pakistan will bring along the expected gender roles, culture and traditional values. In nutshell, it can be viewed as a practice that preserves race, culture, traditions and identities after migration. It also implies that Pakistani culture has a deep influence on the ways Pakistani migrant women make their decisions. It affects generation after generation of Pakistani migrants in a quest to preserve the Pakistani identity.

4.5.3. The Role of Language in Post-Migration Identity

Participants also expressed the role that language played in their post-migration life. It was evident in the transcripts that language played an important role.

Participant 8, a working woman, proudly elaborated, as already reported above:

We make Pakistani food, my all kids speak Urdu, and they can write Urdu although they have never lived in Pakistan. They know Urdu poetry, Urdu songs. I don't think - only when I leave my house, I think that I am not in Pakistan, otherwise within the confinement of the house, I think that I am living in Pakistan. (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020)

My participants also articulated that they speak Urdu at home. Urdu distinguishes them from other groups of people in South Africa as narrated by P8 and strengthens their identities. Linguistic exchanges reflect a symbolic power relation. While the change of habitus generates a pre reflexive reaction to English language, spoken and understood by many migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. As habitus can be called a nexus concept embodying dialectically interlinked varying scales of social behaviour (Bourdieu 1977). Language usage is a sensitive

indicator of social relationships in each field (Bourdieu 1991: 502). Bourdieu's view of language as a symbolic power feature holding history and present also reflects in migrant Pakistani women's preference of speaking Urdu in South Africa.

The stay-at-home women amongst my participants felt that English proficiency in the early years was a problem in their identity development. Three of the stay-at-home women mentioned that lack of confidence in speaking the English language made them nervous, leading to less social connectedness after migration. Unlike stay-at-home women, working women had a good command of English and found it to be a source of blending into the host country easily, thus playing a central role in identity construction.

4.6. Negotiating Identity as a Migrant Pakistani Working Woman

During the interviews, participants reflected on their post migration experiences. These experiences were different for working women and stay-at-home women. Participants who were working in South Africa compared their experiences in South Africa with working in Pakistan. While describing her experience of working in Pakistan, Participant 8 stated:

I think it was very easy to work in Pakistan because it was a conducive environment and everybody respected us, so I think it was like a breeze and it was very comfortable; working here is more challenging because I am an immigrant, although I am a South African for past 23-24 years, yet they consider me a foreigner. (Participant 8, Interview, March 28th, 2020)

Immigrant identity adds to working women's problems. Gender equality at workplaces in South Africa was a new thing for the working participants, as they were not used to this in Pakistan. The advantages of multiple identities for working women include a distinctive identity within the Pakistani community, economic independence, empowerment, and autonomy in life. As Participant 2 illustrated, working after migration has brought positive changes:

I think I have become more empowered and autonomous in my life. It has changed a lot. I am more courageous. In my pre-migration life, I had to ask the male member of my family for doing anything but now I make my own decision. (Participant 2, Interview, March 15th, 2020)

Economic independence also plays an integral role in their recognition and identification of themselves as autonomous women. All four working participants drive and enjoy freedom in terms of going out. Sharma (2011) suggests that in certain cases, migration can provide women with an enhanced opportunity to restructure gender relations and escape from patriarchal values. Since migration adds richness to the existing identities of educated migrant Pakistani women who aspire to work after migration, it allows them to redefine the patriarchal landscape for themselves.

They also feel more empowered in their lives, as they are not economically dependent on their husbands. However, when I mentioned to them that they seemed to be independent and autonomous in their lives, not all of them agreed with this. They responded that they were still trying to negotiate their empowered position; with all this empowerment and autonomy in their post-migration lives, some of them still wanted to hold on to the traditional role of women who cook and care for the family just as a housewife would do. They seemed to be reconciling the binary relation between their independence and being a Muslim Pakistani woman. They are economically independent and have access to the workspace in society, yet they must hold on to their culturally specified gendered roles.

Sader (2008), while exploring the identity construction of Muslim couples in South Africa, found that both Muslim men and women emphasize their religious identity, and in doing so, they prioritise cultural identity and cultural practices less. Sader (2008) further states that, although culture oppresses women, the religion of Islam allows them the freedom to reconstruct their identities. This study by Sader (2008) is contradicted by my study findings that migrant Pakistani women do prioritise their religious identity, yet they do not distance themselves from the cultural identity and cultural practices which in turn inhibit their freedom and access to broader outside space in certain cases.

4.7. Negotiating Identity as a Stay-at-home Migrant Pakistani

Woman

In traditional families in Pakistan, women working outside the house is considered a matter of *gharit* (family dishonour); hence, they do not allow women to work outside the house, and the majority of women in Pakistan remain confined to their houses. When asked about post-migration changes in their lives, the four stay-at-home participants for the study had different

views. Participant 1 had hoped that migration to South Africa would change her ways of life. She expressed her expectations before migration:

I thought I will I enjoy freedom here but it is not like that, I feel more restricted here, I think it is not the culture, it's the men who have been brought up in a way that they don't change, no matter where they go. (Participant 1, Interview, March 13th, 2020)

She came from a joint family system (an extended, multi-generational household) and her extended family back in Pakistan still bothers her. By contrast, Participant 3 said:

My husband is supportive, I am free to go anywhere, I have a credit card, I go shopping and spend as I wish, and nobody ever questions me for anything. I enjoy equality in my household decision-making. Therefore, I enjoy freedom. I never thought about working. I spent my life raising children, nourishing them well so I never felt the need to work. (Participant 3, Interview, March 11th, 2020)

Three out of four stay-at-home participants mentioned that they do not work but stay at home and look after the children and household as they would have done in Pakistan. This indicates that they are upholding their family values, taught by mothers to their daughters in a typical Pakistani household, to be a good wife. However, they also articulated that they enjoy freedom and peace of mind in South Africa as they are away from their extended family politics. Participants who were married before their husbands migrated to South Africa told me that their husbands have become more caring and supportive than they were in Pakistan.

4.8. Discrimination and Identity

Discrimination based on colour is the most visible form of discrimination (Monk 2015). As described in the previous section, all of my respondents identified themselves as Muslim Pakistani through rich descriptions of religion and culture. This self-identification as a Muslim Pakistani in South Africa poses potential risks of discrimination based on colour, race and religion.

When asked about the experiences of discrimination, participants had contrasting opinions. While some of them never faced discrimination (or did not want to mention it), others faced discrimination daily. Referring to this, Participant 8 frequently indicated in the interview that

They (locals) look down upon us. Yeah, so many times, even when I come out of my office, sometimes when I am driving, any taxi man would just fly out of his taxi and say you, go back to your country. (Participant 8, Interview, March 18th, 2020)

She described that prevailing racial discrimination has been the reason for her strong connectedness to Pakistan, as she was never discriminated against on the basis of colour in Pakistan. She also added that because of this discrimination and racism, she has never been able to associate herself with or relate herself to South Africa. Echoing this, Participant 2, elaborated that:

I think I face discrimination everywhere. At the end of the day I am a foreign investor here so no matter how much I try, locals view me as a threat. I never get good views. There is no space for people like us, but we keep on struggling and making our space: It does (affect) a lot, I am a foreigner here and my colour affects me the most. So many times. If it was not for race, I would have gotten so many business opportunities. (Participant 2, Interview, March 15th, 2020)

The analysis of the narratives of the participants collectively reveals that they did not report facing discrimination based on their religion. They went on to say that they enjoy religious freedom here. Unlike the stay-at-home participants, the working women revealed that they have faced discrimination at their workplaces on many occasions, being regarded as foreigners. While in Pakistan, they faced discrimination based on their gender. Although they have freedom of practicing their religion, they face racial discrimination and xenophobia, which causes them to gravitate towards their religious identity as a Muslim and towards a cultural identity as a Pakistani.

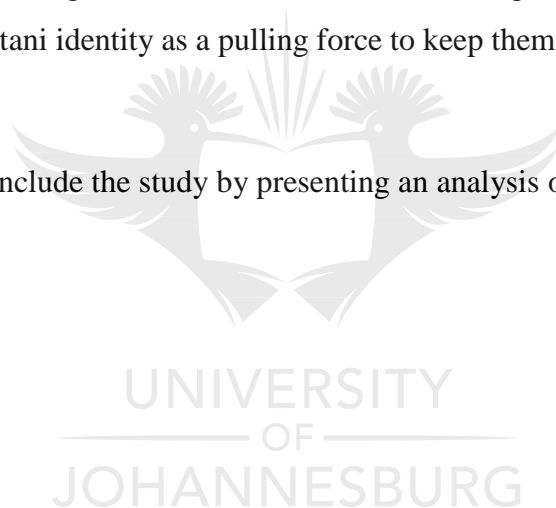
4.9. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings for the study through thematic analysis of eight migrant Pakistani women living in South Africa. The findings suggested that social, cultural and economic capital empower migrant Pakistani women to construct their identities after migration to South Africa. The findings were presented in the light of Bourdieu's different forms of capital, which will be further discussed and analysed in the final chapter. The participants in the study gave an insight into the cultural experiences of identity construction. Family reunification is the primary reason motivating these women to migrate to South Africa.

In a quest to contest and construct identities, religion and culture play a decisive role in their lives. Study findings suggested that the family plays its conventional cultural role in the post-migration life of the women. Through the narratives, it was concluded that the identity of migrant women is manoeuvring between the two areas of religion and culture. Migrant Pakistani women portray a sense of belonging through strategies of maintaining their cultural practices and linkages to Pakistan.

The contrasting experiences of working women and stay-at-home women after migration confirm the assumption that migration adds to the empowerment and autonomy of women. It also brings forth the fundamental difference and transformation in gender discrimination after migration in comparison to patriarchal practices in Pakistan. Participants tend to be appreciative of their Muslim Pakistani identity and describe this harmony between a Muslim and Pakistani identity as a great source of satisfaction. Religious identity is of primary importance for the Pakistani identity as a pulling force to keep them connected to their culture and traditions.

The next chapter will conclude the study by presenting an analysis of the main findings of the study.



Chapter 5

Constructing and Negotiating Identity through the Lens of Culture: Limitations of the Study, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

As stated at the beginning of the study, this thesis is grounded in an analysis of the role of culture in the process of identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. By problematising culture, this study qualitatively explored and analysed the experiences of migrant Pakistani women through their narratives. The theoretical framework of habitus, forms of capital and incorporation of terms as a reference point, integrated, produced unique accounts of the Pakistani women. The women's accounts were analysed and presented under different themes and sub-themes in the previous chapter, categorised mainly under the objectives of the study. The findings were discussed in light of the literature on challenges of identity construction for migrant Pakistani women. This chapter provides an analytical summary of the study and concludes it by presenting the main findings of the study followed by limitations and recommendations for further research.

5.2. Review of the Literature and Research Methods

The literature related to migration from Pakistan, the status of women in Pakistan, identity after migration, and post-migration challenges of migrant Pakistani women in different parts of the world were reviewed in Chapter 2. The literature review suggested that Pakistani women migrate for family reunification. They are also expected to keep the culture and traditions alive in the host country, which in turn influences their post-migration life. Chapter 2 also identified a gap in the literature around the role of culture in the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. To seek a nuanced understanding of the experiences of Pakistani women from a theoretical perspective, Bourdieu's (1990) theory of social practice was used. It was critical to comprehend the importance of habitus and cultural capital, which are key amongst migrant Pakistani women's relations and identity construction within the South

African context. Using qualitative research methodology, data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with eight migrant Pakistani women in Pretoria and Johannesburg. Thematic analysis of the data yielded main themes such as forms of belonging, the role of culture amongst migrant Pakistani women, and a number of subthemes which were used to comprehend and discuss the findings.

5.3. Locating the Identity Construction Process of Migrant Pakistani Women in Bourdieu's Theory of Social Practice

According to Bourdieu's (1990:53) definition, "habitus is systems of durable, transposable dispositions; structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures". Habitus is a social setting that allows human beings as social actors to act in a certain manner in a space (Radogna 2019). It is also the crucial structure for social relations and interactions among social actors in a setting (Erel 2010). After migration to South Africa, migrant Pakistani women developed a new habitus as they formed new relations and interactions, thus modifying their habitus. Since habitus is an under-construction process, a change in the field of the migrant Pakistani women subjects their habitus to change also. Similarly, identity construction in a field is a dynamic process, and migrant Pakistani women's agency determines it. Theoretically speaking, in a changing habitus, migrant Pakistani women are free to construct and reconstruct their identities. They also have the ability and capacity to exercise their agency to construct a new identity. However, this ability and capacity is compromised by cultural practices and religious dictates that come with them from the home country.

Although migrant Pakistani women have entered into a given field, their cultural context still articulates the religious and cultural practices of Pakistan. Their stocks of cultural capital influence their identity construction process in a new field. From the responses of participants, it can be concluded that their habitus has changed, as they no longer live in an Islamic state. Similarly, social interaction with friends and relatives, which is considered to be of great significance in Pakistani society, is no longer available. Their social circle cannot replicate the family and relatives back in Pakistan. This resonates with the study of Rugunanan (2017), in which she finds that migrant Indian women also long for their families back in India and feel a varying sense of belonging to South Africa. Similarly, migrant Pakistani women experience reduced socialisation compared to Pakistan. In the process of constructing their new identities,

they continue to navigate in a given field with their social, cultural and economic capital, to construct and add layers to their existing identities as Muslim and Pakistani.

For working women, this process of identity construction is empowered by economic capital while for stay-at-home women, social and cultural capital takes a central position in their quest to construct an identity. While locating habitus transformation in Bourdieu's idea of habitus, it is evident from the study findings and narratives of the participants that there are continuities in the different forms of habitus for migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. Since the cultural capital of these women, as exhibited by the participants, does not change, and they continue to practice their religion and culture much as they did in Pakistan, it is evident that their habitus does not shift. Similarly, cultural elements of language, as they prefer to speak in Urdu, food, as they prepare according to Pakistani cuisine, dress, as they continue to dress in *shalwar kameez*, shows that they strongly retain their cultural capital.

As shreds of evidence from the literature suggest (Woodward 2018), economic inactivity is very common amongst women living within and outside of Pakistan. This economic inactivity results in dependence on the male member of the family. Their habitus in Pakistan discourages them from working outside the house for financial gains. Since half of my participants were working women and tended to have strong economic capital, unlike the situation in Pakistan, it is apparent that, in the case of working women, there are discontinuities in forms of habitus, as their modified habitus in the transnational space of South Africa allows and enables them to work and be self-sufficient. Moreover, they got opportunities to expand their businesses and get employed at better places in South Africa than they would have in Pakistan, resulting in an enhanced economic capital. This strengthened economic capital reshapes social and cultural capital, as accounts of participants suggested that at times they could not go out for all the community gatherings or celebrations due to work commitments. It takes a toll on their bonding with their social networks in Pakistani community, but it strengthens their bridging with the host society at their work places; as one of my participants mentioned, their South African co-worker has helped them to establish networks with local population, but in turn results in a lack of exhibition of their cultural capital, which is highly dominant in the stay-at-home category of the study.

Oliver and O'Reilly (2010) state that habitus is also the source of acquiring knowledge. Pakistani women acquire knowledge about their culture in their habitus in Pakistan; after migration they apply the acquired knowledge about culture to a modified and transformed

habitus in South Africa, thus strengthening their cultural capital. Education also plays an important role in institutionalising cultural capital: participants in the study who had attained education exhibited a strong sense of comfort in their cultural capital and new social settings after migration, while two of the participants who were not very educated expressed discomfort in their social settings after migration.

The study aimed to analyse the role of culture as well as measuring the cultural practices and challenges related to these practices. Migrant Pakistani women have modified their cultural practices in South Africa. Their cultural capital, in the form of language, traditions, customs, and skills, is unpacked in South Africa to fit or find a place in South Africa. This “rucksack” approach refers to cultural capital as a “treasure chest” (Erel 2010). In doing this, migrant Pakistani women add value or bargain for exchanges which might not be valued in Pakistan. For example, one of my participants told me that she likes to eat lentils with bread as one of her local South African Muslim friends taught her, but she would never do so in Pakistan as it would be considered culturally strange. Likewise, their lifestyle has also been modified, since the participants live here in nuclear families, but they migrated from the joint family system in Pakistan. They get used to living in a nuclear family culture in South Africa, which puts them at odds with their extended families in Pakistan. This happens because most of them hail from the rural areas of Pakistan but are settled in urban areas of South Africa. This grants them more and easier access to the spaces outside their homes. In doing so, they feel empowered as they had restricted movement outside of their houses in rural areas of Pakistan. When they had to move, it was strictly monitored by their male family members.

Migrant Pakistani women in South Africa engage in community gatherings to validate their cultural capital, which is different to Pakistan as in Pakistan they only have limited gatherings for weddings of their relatives or birthdays, but here they often have gatherings for no specific reason. Also, in terms of dress, my participants reflected that they wear heavily embroidered dresses to casual gatherings in South Africa, which they used to wear to weddings in Pakistan, as they feel happy and confident in these kinds of dresses. Thus dressing trends also signify a competition to show that they are aware of the latest dressing trends in Pakistan. They use their cultural resources, such as language, food and dress to develop a distinct position for themselves, which is reflected in the articulation of an identity as a Muslim Pakistani woman.

The power relation between men and women also affects the way these social actors acquire cultural competence (Nowicka 2015). Migrant Pakistani men are socially and economically

active migrant agents in South Africa, and migrant Pakistani women are passive economic and social agents as they get fewer opportunities to work or interact with the host society (except in the case of working women). In this case, the ideas and values are concentrated in cultural capital by migrant Pakistani women, which in turn signifies a cultural identity. By contrast, working women had strong economic capital; yet, although it dominates and probably translates into their social and cultural capital, their lives are strongly influenced by cultural capital. However, with the possession of economic capital and autonomy coupled with freedom of movement and access to resources, economic capital tends to be the controlling factor for migrant working Pakistani women. It creates a tension amongst migrant Pakistani women as working women are seen to be challenging the dominant cultural practices, but at the same time, they are appreciated for using their education in the field.

The focus of the study is on the post-migration period of migrant Pakistani women, who become cultural representatives of the Pakistani community through the validation of their cultural capital. As Bourdieu (1990) states that cultural capital of an individual is an unconscious learning and influence from its surroundings. Similarly, cultural capital is an embodiment of cultural patterns in the form of taste, skills, and attributes. Pakistani migrant women's habitus, especially in terms of their cultural capital which they bring with them from Pakistan, does not shift very much. Cultural forms of capital such as religion, food, language, especially within Pakistani spaces, does not change and is kept, within the South African context. Through social ties, these migrant women enhance their social capital by gaining information and assistance from their own migrant community. Participation in various cultural events is important in sustaining of social ties amongst migrant Pakistani women. Their cultural capital gains importance due to their transnational boundaries. There are various hierarchies of cultural distinctions manifested and validated by migrant Pakistani women. Thus cultural capital significantly influences their identity construction as well as the positionality of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

5.4. Main Findings of the Study

The following subsections analyse the main findings of the research.

5.4.1. Migration as a Source of Empowerment

For women, migration can be seen as an escape from patriarchal norms. It also provides women with an opportunity to change and challenge traditional norms and gain autonomy. But in certain situations, its benefits can be constrained and hampered by the socio-cultural context and gender discrimination. The lives of women are strongly linked to their country of origin, as they continue to preserve their social, cultural and religious identities in their post migration life. Migrants, specifically migrant women, carry the burden of social, cultural and economic capital. They rely upon their country of origin for cultural empowerment which in turn compromises their agency to construct and reshape their identities devoid of their culture and homeland. The concept of cultural capital also suggests that migrants tend to keep their cultural values and linkages as assets.

Evidence from this study also suggests that migrant Pakistani women in South Africa migrated to join their husbands in South Africa. Studies such as those by Syed and Pio (2010), Chowbey (2016) and Woodward (2018) state that women are often dependent on men for their economic needs as well as for access to social networks in their post-migration lives. By contrast, the findings of my study illustrate that migrant Pakistani woman, albeit in a culturally protected environment in their post-migration lives, exercise independence and empowerment. The intersection of religion and culture is central to their identities. Working women in my study believed that their employment and freedom halted stagnation and offered prosperousness as well as certainty of their wellbeing in South Africa.

Women in the study also demonstrated that they associate strongly with Pakistani culture, but they enjoy the freedom and lower dependency on their husbands in South Africa. The use of the notion of the reference point also reasserts that migrant Pakistani women keep their strong connections back home and follow many things from the culture they inherited, but at the same time, they continue to enjoy empowerment and autonomy granted by migration. Furthermore, the empowerment increase is manifold for working women. Kou and Bailey (2017) argue that migration can provide women with an opportunity to escape from gendered norms. Despite their aspiration to do so in the country they have migrated to, they find themselves burdened by the cultural traditions of their native countries. This process of empowerment is challenged by the cultural elaboration of patriarchy. Likewise, the working women's category in my sample also exhibited a strong sense of confidence and empowerment after migration, as it added to their identities as women and their agency to exercise power via financial

independence, but at the same time, they needed to keep up with their assigned gender roles as wives and mothers.

The identities of working women can be summed up as Muslim, Pakistani, migrant, working women, and in terms of social roles, as wives, daughters and mothers. For working women, the advantages of having multiple identities are: a distinctive identity within the Pakistani community; economic independence; empowerment; and autonomy in life. It also has disadvantages, because working can be stressful at times and it is also hard to maintain a balance between work and home. Discrimination in the workplace is also a challenge. So, unlike in Pakistan, culture tends to have a positive impact on the lives of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, which serves as a new finding in this context.

5.4.2. Appreciation and Maintenance: Understanding the Importance of Culture in the Identity Construction of Migrant Pakistani Women

The study explored the views of eight participants in light of Bourdieu's forms of capital and habitus transformation. As explained in Chapter 2, migrants bring along their cultural capital while settling down in the host country. In doing so, they are in a process of exhibiting their own culture as well as negotiating their agency in a new cultural space. While navigating through the semi-structured interviews, it became quite evident that the migrant Pakistani women living in South Africa have not changed a lot in terms of their lifestyles, food and religious practices in South Africa. Participants assumed an insider status for me, which resulted in less reflection on themselves in the conversations related to culture. However, my insider identity helped me to generate conversations revolving around the challenges of life abroad, experiences of visiting Pakistan and settlement in South Africa.

Participants were appreciative of the culture in terms of it being very respectful for women, with men having to carry out the role of economic provider while women continue to look after household duties. While largely appreciating their own culture, they were at times a bit critical about some of its aspects, such as the authoritarian and dominant role of men. During the interviews, the presence of the husbands of the participants was intrusive. Their presence affected the way my participants answered the interview questions. The cautious attitude of the participants reflected the limitations on their agency to act freely, similar to Pakistan where there is strict monitoring of women's interactions with others. While the participants had contrasting views, they all believed that, back in Pakistan, there is still patriarchy, which

traditionalises the superiority of men over women. Working women participants in this study reflected that, in routine matters, they enjoy equality, but in critical family decision making, such as marrying off their children or education, the final say still belongs to the male family members. One of the working participants was candid about this male superiority in such matters, stating that she feels less burdened if such decisions prove to be wrong.

Within this appreciation of culture, there was also a defensiveness about the notion of culture. There was a stigma on discussing gender roles and the problems faced in light of these roles. Some participants deemed it inappropriate to discuss these roles during the interviews. Some were defensive and insisted that there was nothing such as gender roles, and they had all the equality which any woman in the world would enjoy. This corresponds with a notion of defensiveness, clearly and deliberately stating that there was nothing wrong with “our culture” and everything was good.

Culture tends to be the dominant factor in identity in the narratives of the respondents. The understanding and feelings of the participants about their post-migration identity gave a nuanced account of their identity in religious and cultural terms. Findings also suggest that religious and cultural identities are inseparable for them. Some of them considered religion to be a segment of culture and culture to be a segment of religion. The unstinting sense of a unique identity was observed throughout the exploration of identity-related questions.

5.5. Challenging the Identity Construction of Migrant Pakistani Women in South Africa

The study aimed to explore the challenges to the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. Findings of the study suggested that the cultural capital of migrant Pakistani women enables them to construct a distinct identity in South Africa by utilising various elements of culture as well as keeping their linkages to Pakistan. However, with the domestication of stay-at-home women, opportunities to interact and assimilate in the host society are limited. Their reliance on social networks of friends within the Pakistani community empowers them to continue practising their culture. The working women used their economic capital to construct autonomous, independent, and empowered identities for themselves which were also challenged by the influence of culture as it tended to restrict their autonomy by pushing them back into their gender roles.

Interestingly, the findings also suggest that participants had a traditional explanation of how they are supposed to be as a housewife and mother, and they use this traditional explanation as a reference point to navigate between their home and work lives in South Africa. Besides, the experiences of these women reflected that they upheld the expectations of culturally prescriptive gender roles and their subservient position of being a woman. However, the women in the study also claimed that they enjoyed equality which gave them equal rights and freedom of movement in South Africa. This finding challenges the traditionally portrayed role of Pakistani women as submissive and subordinate individuals.

Women in the study also said that their families – husbands in particular, as all the participants were living in a nuclear family with their husbands and children – were generally extremely supportive in their post-migration life, and they acknowledged a shift in the gender roles compared to what is practised in Pakistan. Findings from the two categories of my sample of migrant Pakistani women generated differences in the experiences. Working women articulated the importance of economic capital and financial independence in describing their positions within the household. By contrast, stay-at-home women experienced financial dependency on their husbands. Both types of sample equally attributed their distinct identities to their cultural capital and religion which made them different from the rest of the migrant communities in South Africa. Religion, as a central part of their lives, gives them comfort, freedom and directions to construct their identities accordingly.

5.6. Limitations of the Study

This research project analysed the role of culture in the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, but it is limited by the subject and geography. The findings of the study are not universal, and limited to the sample under study only. The study only reflects the perceptions and ideas of the individual women who took part in this study. Despite all the efforts to focus on migrant Pakistani women, the study has limitations in terms of the heterogeneity in the sample composition.

Snowball sampling was used to recruit participants and therefore I ended up having participants originating from the Punjab and Sindh provinces of Pakistan. As described in the first chapter, Pakistan has diverse cultures in its five provinces. It would have been ideal to have participants from all the provinces of Pakistan to provide their experiences of identity construction in South Africa. However, there were only eight participants recruited for the study because this study

is a minor dissertation, so it was not easy to capture diverse experiences. It would have been ideal to have more Pakistani women as participants but, because of the limitation of time, it was not feasible to do more interviews. The fact that I conducted the study in Pretoria and Johannesburg, and the small size of the sample, means its findings cannot be generalised for all migrant Pakistani women living in South Africa, as migrant Pakistani women living in other cities of South Africa may have different experiences altogether.

5.7. Recommendations for Further Research

While this study attempted to explore the identity construction experiences of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, it raises some questions and makes recommendations for further research and deeper exploration of phenomena related to migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

Since my sample consisted of only first-generation migrants, it would be of great use to see how the second generation of migrant Pakistani women view their identity. Participants in my study were all married women; it would be interesting to find out the influence of culture on single migrant Pakistani women.

While belonging to the same culture opened easy access for me to the participants, it also hinders gaining explanation of the phenomena, which are considered normal and less significant for discussion because of the participants' assumption that I already knew many things about the culture, and they take those things for granted. They might respond in detail to the same questions asked by a person from a different culture, so it is recommended that someone from another culture should research the topic to deepen understanding.

Since my sample consisted of both working women and stay-at-home women, it would be significantly useful to conduct separate studies on working women and stay-at-home women to get a more thorough understanding of their specific experiences in South Africa.

One of the participants for this study was an independent migrant, as she did not migrate for family reunification but business purposes. It would be interesting to explore if there are other independent migrant Pakistani women, and their challenges as a migrant woman in South Africa in general and in the Pakistani community specifically.

This study is unique in the sense that it forms a basis for further research about migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

5.8. Conclusion

Navigating through the research was an amazing journey for me since I invested my personal and academic commitment in this subject as I rediscovered the researcher-student inside me. I tried to be a culturally humble person. This is because of the complexity of Pakistani culture and the interplay of religion and culture in the lives of Pakistani women. I am hopeful that this study has provided nuanced understanding of the culture of Pakistan and its role in post-migration experiences of Pakistani women. I intend to leave the reader thinking that culture tends to influence the lives of women more than men. Religion, gender, and the patriarchal landscape are sites for the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women.

Post-migration identities, according to my participants, have not changed a lot for them. Participants mentioned that, within the boundaries of their homes, they act, eat, speak, and live as in their culture of origin, but some of them, when they step out of their homes, behave in a certain way that leads to belonging in the host country. Migrant Pakistani women have positioned themselves across two identities, religious identities, and cultural identities. Although identity construction is a fluid process and requires continuous positioning and repositioning, religion gave solace to my participants in the reconstruction of their identities. Participants demonstrated that religious identity was fixed for them. However, cultural identity was contextual, as it fused the Pakistani and South African identities, allowing them to adapt to some of the South African ways by blending both identities; but they preferred to adhere to their identities as Muslim Pakistanis.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Letter to Invite Participants for the Study



MIGRANT PAKISTANI WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION OF MIGRANT PAKISTANI WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

Description of the Research

Dear all

I am masters' student at the department of Sociology, in the University of Johannesburg. My research study probes into the role played by culture on the identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

I am specifically looking for individuals who are:

- a) Adult Women (Above 18 years of age)
- b) Living in South Africa
- c) Migrated from Pakistan to South Africa
- d) First generation migrant
- e) Born and raised in Pakistan

If you fulfil these categories or know someone who falls into these categories, and do not mind being interviewed for academic purpose, please contact me at

Cell: 0637816193, Email: 219021954@student.uj.ac.za

Your valuable contribution by participating in this research will help to conceptualise the important subject of identity construction of migrant Pakistani women in South Africa.

I am looking forward for your response, Thank you

Yours truly,

Imrana Qasim

Appendix B: Information Sheet

PROJECT TITLE:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION OF
MIGRANT PAKISTANI WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

RESEARCHER NAME: IMRANA QASIM

This invitation letter and informed consent form may contain some words that are unfamiliar to you. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand or anything you want to learn more about. You may take home an unsigned copy of this consent form to think about or discuss with family or friends before making a decision. Once you understand, and if you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign your name or make your mark on this form. You will be offered a copy to keep.

INTRODUCTION

My name is Imrana Qasim. I am student at University of Johannesburg. I would like to invite you to take part in this study. I am conducting this research for my Master's degree in Sociology. I have selected you to participate in this study as the research is about migrant Pakistani women in South Africa. As a Pakistani migrant woman, you are best suited to be interviewed for my research.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

Before you decide whether to be in this study, I would like to explain the purpose, the risks, and benefits, what is expected of you and what you can expect from me.

- It is up to you whether or not you join the study
- You may choose to leave this study at any time

AIM OF THE STUDY

There has not been much written about migrant Pakistani women in South Africa, particularly about migrant Pakistani women so the aim of the study is to write about migrant Pakistani women and their identity construction in South Africa.

RESEARCH

You can tell the experiences of your life as a migrant Pakistani women and how your culture influence your identity construction in South Africa. During the interview, I will write down what you say. I will also record the interview using a voice recorder. We will use a voice recorder to make sure we record your words exactly how you said them. The notes and the recording will not contain your name or other identifying information and will be stored on a computer that is password protected. The audio recordings will be destroyed after 5 years.

What are my rights as a participant?

Your participation is voluntary. You are free to decide if you want to take part in the research. You can refuse to participate, or stop at any time without giving any reason.

Are there any risks or discomforts involved in interviews?

There are no risks or discomforts involved in this interview.

Are there any benefits?

There are no particular benefits of participating in this research.

Is there any cost to me taking part in the interview?

No, there is no material cost of taking part in this study.

Will I be paid?

This study is purely for academic purposes so no payments will be made

Will what I tell you remain confidential?

Yes. Whatever you will say will be kept confidential. Pseudo names will be used in place of your real name. No reference to your name will be made. You are free to participate and latter access the data and its interpretation. Nobody except the researcher and its supervisors will be able to listen to your interview. Your real name, identity and affiliation will not be revealed in the dissertation or transcripts. Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The University of Johannesburg Research Ethics Committee has approved this study proposal

PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS

If you ever have any questions about this study, you can contact:

Researcher

Imrana Qasim, Phone: 0637816193

Email: imranaqasim999@gmail.com

Supervisors

- Prof Pragna Rugunanan, Email: prugunanan@uj.ac.za
- Prof Tapiwa Chagonda, Email: tchangonda@uj.ac.za

Ethics Committee contact details

Email: cnonkwelo@uj.ac.za



Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

I hereby confirm that I have been informed about my involvement in this research.

I have also received, read (or had it read to me) and understood the above written information regarding the study.

I understand that what I say will be written down and / or recorded on tape.

I also agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a protected computerized system.

I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation. I am not required to give a reason for withdrawal.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate.

SIGNATURES:

I have read this consent form (or had it read and explained to me), and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My signature below confirms that:

☐ I agree to participate in the study

Signature of participant:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher Signature: _____

Permission to Audio Record

My signature below confirms that:

☐ I DO NOT give the research staff permission to audio-record my interview

☐ I give the research staff permission to audio-record my interview

Participant Signature:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Semi Structured Interview Guide (Copy)

Date.....Place.....

Participant

Interview duration.....

Recorded: Yes ☐ No ☐

STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

City of residence
Year of birth
Age
Age at the time of migration
Place of birth
Languages
Arrival in South Africa
Citizenship
Ethnicity
Marital Status
Children
Girls <input type="checkbox"/> Boys <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational qualification
Main subject of study
Housewife
Working women
Employed

SEMI STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

- Why did you come to South Africa?
- Did you migrate with your partner or joined him later?
- Do you have good interaction with local people around you?
- What were the challenges that you faced when you came here?
- Are you maintaining your national culture here in terms of language, dressing and food?
- What are the changes that you have observed after coming to South Africa?
 - In terms of social, cultural and religious
- Do you think that it is important to maintain in South Africa and why?

Religion.....Culture.....Identity.....

- Do you enjoy good relations with other ethnicities?
- What is the level of your religiosity?

- Do you go to mosque or affiliated with any religious organization?
- How often do you visit Pakistan?
- How do you explain your experience of visiting Pakistan?
- How will you describe the culture of Pakistan?
- Do you have any future plan to settle back in Pakistan
- Yes.....
- No.....

Give reasons.....

Identity

- How do you identify yourself?
- How will you describe your identity>?
- Do you feel any pressure to change your identity?
- How has your identity changed after migration to South Africa?
- Is there something important that you want to tell me about yourself

Culture

- How do you define culture of Pakistan?
- How do you define the culture of province/ city you belong to in Pakistan?
- Do you celebrate cultural festivals of Pakistan in South Africa?
- How do you dress mostly?
- Do you prefer to wear shalwar qameez over western dress?
- Is there any dressing restriction by your male partner?
- What dress you prefer for your daughters to wear?
- How do see the role of Pakistani culture in your post migration life in South Africa?
- How will you describe your cultural linkages to Pakistan? Have this link become stronger after migration to South Africa?
- What kind of food you cook mostly in your home?
- Is food an important part of social gatherings in Pakistani community?
- Have you ever faced discrimination in South Africa?
- How South African people view you?
- How does your race, religion and identity affects you in South Africa?
- Have you ever been refused for something in South Africa due to your race?

Questions for working women

- Were you working in Pakistan before migration to South Africa?
- Where are you working now?
- Was your family supportive of your working?
- What are the workplace challenges that you face?
- How do the male members of your family view you're working here?
- Have you ever been asked to not work and stay-at-home?
- Do you think that Pakistani culture is not supportive for working women?
- Do you feel any discrimination against male members of your family?
- How does your extended family back in Pakistan view you are working here?

- When you visit Pakistan, are you asked about your working here in South Africa?
- Do you think that it is important for educated women to work?
- What are your views about gender roles, bringing in the fact that you are working women?
- Have you felt any hurdle in your progress because of the cultural context?
- If you were working before migration, how will you compare that with working now?

Questions for Stay-at-home women

- Do you enjoy freedom in terms of going out?
- Did you think about studying further?
- Are you and your male family member equally responsible for household decisions?
- How do you explain the role of your male family members in household?
- Have you ever felt discriminated against male family member?
- How does gender roles affect your life?
- Have you ever thought about working?
- Will you be allow to work if you want to?
- What kind of challenges you face being a housewife?
- Do you think that Pakistani culture puts so much pressure on women to fulfil household duties?
- What kind of changes did you make in household routine after coming to South Africa?

General questions

- Which TV channels you watch?
- How will you identify your social class?
- Do you think that migrant Pakistani women are playing their fullest role in South Africa?
- Do you have strong connection back home in Pakistan?
- How your connection back in Pakistan influences your life here?
- Do you celebrate all cultural and religious festivals here?
- What is the role of male family members in your life? pre and post migration
- Do you think that religion plays a dominant role in your identity?
- How will you explain the role of culture in shaping your identity as migrant Pakistani women in South Africa?
- How do see your children living and marrying in South Africa?

Closing questions

- Was there anything uncomfortable during the interview?
- Were you hesitant to answer some of the questions?
- Can I get back to you in future for some clarifications or more questions related to the study?
- Was there anything that you had in mind that I might ask, but I did not?

- Can you recommend me to someone who meet the same criteria as you to be interviewed?

Thank you so much for input and time to take part in this study. I assure that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained.



Appendix E: Schedule of Interviews

Participant	Date of interview	Occupation	City
P1	13.3.2020	Housewife	Pretoria
P2	15.3.2020	Employed	Johannesburg
P3	11.3.2020	Housewife	Pretoria
P4	18.3.2020	Employed	Johannesburg
P5	12.3.2020	Employed	Pretoria
P6	22.3.2020	Housewife	Johannesburg
P7	10.3.2020	Housewife	Pretoria
P8	18.3.2020	Employed	Johannesburg

Appendix F: Ethics Clearance letter



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

11 January 2020

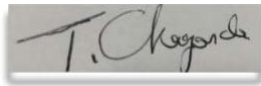
ETHICAL CLEARANCE NUMBER	REC-01-005-2020
REVIEW OUTCOME	Approved
APPLICANT(S)	Mrs. I. Qasim (219021954)
TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT	An Analysis of the Role of Culture in the Identity Construction of Migrant Pakistani Women in South Africa
DEPARTMENT	Sociology
SUPERVISOR(S)	Prof. P. Rugunanan & Prof. T. Chagonda

Dear Mrs. I. Qasim

The Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee has gone through your research proposal and is satisfied that it is compliant with the approved ethical standards of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg.

The REC would like to extend its best wishes to you in your research project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Chagonda', on a light-colored rectangular background.

Prof Tapiwa Chagonda

Interim Chair: Faculty of Humanities REC

Tel: 011 559 3827

E-mail: tchagonda@uj.ac.za



Appendix G: Letter from Pakistan South Africa Association

PAKISTAN SOUTH AFRICA ASSOCIATION

266 Tangerine Street
Laudium
0037

P.O. Box 1417
Laudium
0037
Tel: +27 83 664 7766



E-mail : info@psaa.co.za
Web : www.psaa.co.za

Date: 07/10/2020

To whom it may concern:

There are approximately 150,000 to 200,000 Pakistanis living in South Africa at present.

Most of Pakistani nationals are here with their families. They are employed in all sectors of economy including business, professions of medicine, and engineering, banking and multinational firms.

Yours Truly

Mian Naseer Ahmed

President

Pakistan south Africa association



Appendix H: Description of Participants

PARTICIPANTS	DESCRIPTION
Participant 1	Participant 1 was a very shy person at the start of the interview. Living a life that has financial as well married-life problems made her bitter about the life. She had three beautiful daughters and seemed to be worried about the future of her daughters. She expressed her longing to have a boy child. Although she has problems living in South Africa, she does not want to go back to Pakistan and thinks about moving to Canada or America in the future.
Participant 2	Participant 2 separated from her husband when he got second wife. Her only daughter is married in Pakistan. She was the sweetest person I met. Despite being busy in her office work, she gave me time for a detailed interview. She is a beautiful lady and looks noticeably young for her age. Her nuanced responses about Pakistani men and culture depicts the bitterness of her marriage experience.
Participant 4	Participant 4 was the most vocal among my study participants. A young educated working woman full of confidence and passion to work and progress in her career, she was a true depiction of modern Muslim women in my study. Her three year old daughter accompanied us during the interviews with her singing of poems.
Participant 5	Participant 5, a mother of three children, was very welcoming and friendly. She had the specific accent of Karachi. Although her mother-in-law was visiting her from Pakistan when we agreed to the interview, she nevertheless took out time to give the interview. She is very fond of wearing Eastern dresses. She had a very supportive husband; both of them work at the same place.
Participant 6	Participant 6 is a very well-educated and affectionate women. Her beautifully organized house spoke for her aesthetic tastes. She was a very

	dedicated housewife and mother. She was adamant about the fact that she can never negotiate on her identity as a mother.
Participant 7	Participant 7 is a bubbly young woman. During the interview, her three month old son was in her lap. She beautifully maintains her house and kids. She was very spontaneous in her replies. She kept talking about her family back in Pakistan as she misses them so much. Being the youngest in her parent's house, she was well pampered but after marriage and children, she thinks that life is difficult. Although she is well educated, she does not think that she can work owing to her children and household responsibilities.
Participant 8	Participant 8 is a confident woman in her fifties. She wears a beautiful <i>hijab</i> and dresses moderately. She described her life experiences to me in a nuanced manner. Despite living in an expensive mansion, she was a very humble and down to earth person. She was very encouraging and asked me to call her <i>Api</i> (that's what younger sisters call their elder sister in Pakistan). Her daughters and mother were also present. We had valuable discussion during the interview about different issues and ended up spending 3 hours together.